Friedrich-Schiller-Universität Jena

Philosphische Fakultät

Historisches Institut

Tanforan: A Microhistoric Study of Social Patterns and Resistance in an American Assembly Center for Japanese Americans during World War II

Magisterarbeit zur Erlangung des akademischen Grades

MAGISTER ARTIUM (M.A.)

vorgelegt von Konrad Linke

geboren am 29. Mai 1979, in Jena

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Zweitgutachter: Prof. Dr. Thomas Kroll

Jena, den 13. April 2007

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Jena, den 13. April 2007

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Introduction

> *The serious threat to democracy is not the existence of foreign totalitarian states. It is the existence within our own personal attitudes and within our own institutions of conditions which have given a victory to external authority, discipline, uniformity and dependence upon The Leader in foreign countries. The battlefield is also accordingly here – within ourselves and our institutions.*
>
> – John Dewey[1]

The wartime incarceration of Japanese Americans during World War II has absorbed generations of historians and experienced numerous shifts in focus and interpretation. At first glance it is a history of a minority singled out for discrimination during wartime. In a wider sense, however, it is a telling example of the zeitgeist of the age of totalitarianism, of the nature of the American democracy, and of problems concerning national and cultural identity in a multi-ethnic society. While the present thesis ineluctably relates to these fundamental issues, the main purpose of this microhistoric study is to examine dominance, resistance, and social patterns in one of the sixteen Assembly Centers for Japanese Americans.

In this introduction, I will first delineate how the political leadership of the United States dealt with this episode in hindsight. This leads over to an excursus into the still contested question of terminology. This excursus serves to set apart the summary incarceration of Japanese Americans from other forms of wartime imprisonment; along the way it provides essential facts to this complex of events. Next, I will sketch the main concerns and watersheds in the historical discourse, and comment on a recent debate to illustrate the topicality of the wartime incarceration. After this historiographical survey I will set forth the goals of this study. Following that I lay open my method and discuss the sources used in the analysis. Lastly, by outlining the structure of this thesis I will bridge the gap to the first chapter.

Two months after the attack on Pearl Harbor President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed Executive Order 9066 which authorized the Army – without the declaration of martial law – to remove all persons of Japanese ancestry from the West Coast of the United States. More than 110,000 people, two-thirds of them U.S. citizens, were rounded up and shipped off to prison camps in desolate regions. There most remained until the war ended. In 1976, President Gerald Ford rescinded Executive Order 9066, stating: “We know now what we should have known then; not only was the evacuation wrong, but Japanese Americans were and are loyal Americans.”[2] In 1980, his successor Jimmy Carter signed legislation to create the Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians (CWRIC). The CWRIC was to conduct an official governmental study of Executive Order 9066 and its impact on

1 John Dewey: *Freedom and Culture*, New York: G.P. Putnam’s Sons, 1939, p. 65.

2 *Presidential Proclamation 4417*, Feb. 19, 1976. Presidential documents are online at www.presidency.ucsb.edu.

the Japanese Americans on the Pacific Coast. In 1982, after lengthy public hearings, the commission concluded:

> The promulgation of Executive Order 9066 was not just justified by military necessity, and the decisions which followed from it – detention, ending detention and ending exclusion – were not driven by analysis of military conditions. The broad historical causes which shaped these decisions were race prejudice, war hysteria and a failure of political leadership. Widespread ignorance of Japanese Americans contributed to a policy conceived in haste and executed in an atmosphere of fear and anger at Japan. A grave injustice was done to American citizens and resident nationals of Japanese ancestry who, without individual review or any probative evidence against them, were excluded, removed and detained by the United States during World War II.[3]

The CWRIC's recommendation that the survivors be given an official apology and be paid reparations was later passed by Congress and signed into law by Ronald Reagan.[4] Scholarly research played a major role in laying open the true reasons of the wartime incarceration. In fact, already in 1967, when the first academic conference on the wartime experience of the Japanese Americans was held at the University of California, Los Angeles, not a single scholar was willing to defend the actions of 1942.[5]

While today there is a consensus that the incarceration was unjust and unnecessary, terminology for this phenomenon has remained contested to the present. More specifically, historians are still at odds when it comes to find appropriate substitutes for the official euphemisms "Assembly Center" and "Relocation Camp."[6] The following paragraphs explore the meaning of the most common nomenclatures in use. I will discuss their appropriateness and expose the rationale behind their usage. As a starting point of our inquiry, let us have another look at the CWRIC's report:

> There is a continuing controversy over the contention that the camps were "concentration camps" and that any other term is a euphemism. The government documents of the time frequently use the term "concentration camps," but after World War II, with full realization of the atrocities committed by the Nazis in the death camps of Europe, that phrase came to have a very different meaning. The American relocation centers were bleak and bare, and life in them had many hardships, but they were not extermination camps, nor did the American government embrace a policy of torture and liquidation of the ethnic Japanese. To use the phrase "concentration camps" summons up images and ideas which are inaccurate and unfair.[7]

In the same year Raymond Y. Okamura published an essay in which he elucidated the effects of government euphemisms and defended the usage of "concentration camp."[8] More importantly, while the quote above posits only "concentration camp" as an alternative to government euphemisms,

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3 Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians (CWRIC): *Personal Justice Denied. Report of the Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians*, Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1982, p. 18.

4 The Civil Liberties Act of 1988 provided each survivor with a $20,000 redress payment and a Presidential apology.

5 Roger Daniels: "Words Do Matter. A Note on Inappropriate Terminology and the Incarceration of the Japanese Americans" in *Nikkei in the Pacific Northwest. Japanese Americans and Japanese Canadians in the Twentieth Century*, ed. Louis Fiset and Gail Nomura, Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2005, p. 203.

6 In addition to the variations "Assembly Camp" and "Relocation Center," officials occasionally used "Relocation Project" and "Reception Center" to denote Relocation Camps.

7 CWRIC: *Personal Justice Denied*, p. 27.

8 Raymond Y. Okamura: "The American Concentration Camps: A Cover-up Through Euphemistic Terminology," *Journal of Ethnic Studies* Vol. 10 (1982), pp. 95-109.

Okamura proposed another option, namely "internment camp:"

> An incongruous situation presently exists wherein authors provocatively use internment or concentration camp in their titles, but revert to the old "evacuation-relocation" nomenclature in their text, tables, and illustrations. The record needs rewriting.[9]

Anxious to avoid government euphemism at all costs, Okamura, and with him many historians, authors, and journalists, paid little attention to the terms they used as replacement – with momentous consequences. Let us set aside for a moment the different views on the matter and examine more closely the three terms proposed: 1) Assembly Center and Relocation Camp; 2) internment camp; 3) concentration camp.

"Assembly Center" and "Relocation Camp" represent the terms most commonly employed by the agencies, which operated the camps – that is, the WCCA (Army) and the WRA respectively. The Army, for example, insisted that Assembly Centers were "temporary shelters where evacuees could be assembled and protected."[10] In reality, Japanese Americans were forced to leave their homes to be rounded up in these camps, which were surrounded by barbed wire fences and watchtowers. Armed guards held watch day and night, and anybody who left without permission could be shot, as happened in some instances. Without descending to the details of the prison-like conditions, the terms "Assembly Center" and "Relocation Camp" evidently misrepresent the camps' true nature. They should not be perpetuated without setting them in context and thus exposing them as euphemisms. On the other hand, "Assembly Center" and "Relocation Camp" have the advantage that they clearly designate which kind of camp – of the various camps operated by various agencies during war – is meant.

The term "internment camp" is problematic, too, albeit for different reasons. Internment designates a procedure that has long been recognized in both American and international law. By World War II internment was regulated by a system of rules. The government could only intern prisoners of war and enemy aliens residing in the United States. The latter were arrested by the FBI and formally accused of being engaged in subversive activities. Internees could appeal to a hearing board, which could recommend parole or internment. Of the approximately 8,000 West Coast Japanese interned, one-third was released after such hearings. Finally, in internment camps, Geneva Convention conditions applied; living conditions were generally superior to the Assembly Centers and Relocation Camps.[11]

The procedure vis-à-vis the Japanese Americans incarcerated under Executive Order 9066 was fundamentally different. First of all, two-thirds of them were American citizens. Second, there was no formal charge brought up against them individually. (We must bear in mind that a great number of the incarcerated were infants and elderly people, who could hardly pose a threat to national security.)

9 Raymond Y. Okamura: *American Concentration Camps*, p. 105.
10 U.S. Army, Western Defense Command and Fourth Army: *Final Report: Japanese Evacuation from the West Coast, 1942*, Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1943, p. 93.
11 Daniels: *Words Do Matter*, pp. 191-195.

Consequently, Japanese Americans incarcerated under Executive Order 9066 could not appeal to hearing boards. As Roger Daniels aptly sums up:

> While the decision to intern an individual may not have been just, internment in the United States generally followed the rules set down in American and international law. What happened to those West Coast Japanese Americans who were incarcerated in army and WRA concentration camps was simply lawless.[12]

Hence, "internment camp" and its derivations are inappropriate, not because they are euphemistic: "Internment" is simply misleading because both types of imprisonment happened at the same time. It is for the sake of clarity that "internment" and "internment camps" should be reserved to those enemy aliens who were imprisoned with due process of law.

Unfortunately, many authors use "internment" to describe the mass incarceration of the Japanese-American West Coast population, and to add to the confusion, some book titles indiscriminately mix both types of imprisonment, such as "The Unknown Internment: An Oral History of the Relocation of Italian Americans During World II."[13] It is therefore not surprising that one commonly gets to hear that there was nothing special about the fate of the West Coast Japanese, as the same happened to Germans and Italians, only in lesser numbers. Indeed, selected German enemy aliens and Italian enemy aliens were interned along with Japanese enemy aliens. However, the government did not summarily incarcerate them without due process because of their ethnicity. WRA director Dillon S. Myer nicely summed up the problem of ambiguous nomenclature, when, in a memorandum to his staff, he explains his objections to the term "camp:"

> The term "camp" when used to refer to a relocation center is likewise objectionable. It leads people to confuse the relocation centers administered by the War Relocation Authority with the detention camps and internment camps administered by other agencies [such as the INS and Justice Department]. *The evacuees are not "internees." They have not been "interned."*[14] (emphasis added)

Myer also rejected the term "concentration camp," although it was used by many of his contemporaries, among them President Roosevelt.[15] Immediately after World War II, shocked by Nazi atrocities, the term was off-limits. In the last two decades, however, "concentration camp" has reappeared to designate Santa Anita, Tanforan, Heart Mountain, Manzanar, and their likes. An increasing number of historians deem it to be an appropriate nomenclature, and the Library of Congress established the subject heading "Concentration Camps – United States of America" which, so far, contains only items about the wartime incarceration of the Japanese Americans.[16] Let us briefly review its meaning. According to the most recent edition of the Encyclopedia Britannica concentration camps keep,

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12 Ibid., p. 195.
13 Stephen R. Fox: *The Unknown Internment: An Oral History of the Relocation of Italian Americans During World War II*, Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1990.
14 *Memorandum to All Staff Members, War Relocation Authority, Tule Lake Project, Newell, California*, October 2, 1942; see also *Memorandum: Functions of the Military Police Units at Centers for Japanese Evacuees*, WCCA, JERS: 12:131.
15 Daniels: *Words Do Matter*, p. 201.
16 Ibid., p. 201.

> […] political prisoners and members of national or minority groups who are confined for reasons of state security, exploitation, or punishment, usually by executive decree or military order. Persons are placed in such camps often on the basis of identification with a particular ethnic or political group rather than as individuals and without benefit either of indictment or fair trial. Concentration camps are to be distinguished from prisons interning persons lawfully convicted of civil crimes and from prisoner-of-war camps in which captured military personnel are held under the laws of war. They are also to be distinguished from refugee camps or detention and relocation centres for the temporary accommodation of large numbers of displaced persons.[17]

Since Assembly Centers and Relocation Camps fit all these criteria they are, put bluntly, textbook concentration camps. The definition in the Encyclopedia Americana is wider but no less fitting:

> [A concentration camp is] a guarded enclosure set up by a government for the confinement of special categories of people. Assignment to a concentration camp usually follows a roundup or mass arrest without judicial trial. Men, women, and children may be sent to a camp, where their quarters are generally barracks or tents surrounded by barbed wire.[18]

However, the term "concentration camp" has one obvious drawback: Even though the term is technically appropriate, in the public imagination concentration camps are associated with Nazi death camps. Thus, using concentration camp would evoke images of gas chambers and mass extermination, which was neither the policy of the Army, nor the WRA.

Having cleared up the three predominating nomenclatures let us now evaluate which is best fitted to describe the camps in which Japanese Americans where summarily incarcerated. First of all, "internment camp" – in fact every phrase containing "internment" – is misleading and therefore should be abandoned. Oddly enough, it is probably the term most widely used, particularly in the last twenty years. The reason behind the omnipresence of "internment" is most likely that historians hesitated to use "concentration camp," which they considered too harsh a term. Thus "internment camp" emerged as a makeshift solution, a seemingly happy medium between government euphemisms and the ominous "concentration camp." However, awareness of the confusion caused by the stopgap "internment" has risen substantially within the last five years, resulting in a slight lessening in the use of "internment."[19]

To dismiss out of hand the term "concentration camp" surely would be wrong despite its connotation. It appears that there is more behind the rejection of "concentration camp" than concern about the word's bitter aftertaste: Underneath lies the half-conscious belief that language is a natural growth and not an instrument which we shape for our own purposes.[20] But the process of coinage is not an irreversible one. Historians are able to coin words themselves, and they should not be silent for the sake of political correctness. We need to find terms that accurately reflect events and enlighten our

17 *Encyclopedia Britannica*, Vol. 3 ([15]1993), p. 513.
18 *Encyclopedia Americana*, Vol. 7 (1986), pp. 497-499. It lists three categories of concentration camps: 1) "Western Camps," among them Lord Kitchener's camps for the families of Boer guerilla fighters, as well as the U.S. Relocation Camps of World War II; 2) "Communist Camps;" 3) "Nazi Camps."
19 Daniels: *Words Do Matter*, p. 206.
20 This notion, albeit in a different context, is expressed in the illuminating essay by George Orwell: "Politics and the English Language," in *The Penguin Essays of George Orwell*, eds. Sonia Orwell and Ian Angus, London: Penguin Books, 1984, pp. 354-366.

understanding of the past, and in doing so we certainly have considerable responsibility not to mislead our readers. So it all comes down to the question: Is the term "concentration camp" misleading? With respect to readers in the United States, I would say no. The unlawful incarceration of Japanese Americans is part of the high school curriculum, and classes on it are taught at most colleges. Moreover, living conditions in these camps have been accurately depicted in popular novels, newspaper articles, exhibitions, and documentaries, not to mention the plethora of scholarly work.[21] Hence, in the United States the general standard of knowledge is such that historians can trust their readers to distinguish between American concentration camps and the Nazi death camps.

In Germany, on the contrary, knowledge of this episode of American history is virtually absent. Moreover, the term *Konzentrationslager*, in particular its acronym *KZ*, are inextricably linked with extermination camps such as Auschwitz-Birkenau.[22] For these reasons I will refrain from using the term "concentration camp." After all, there are ways to paraphrase Assembly Centers and Relocation Camps: for example, by using "incarceration" and its derivatives. As for Raymond Okamura's call to completely cut the "evacuation-relocation" nomenclature from text, tables, and illustrations, I disagree. When used sparsely and in the proper context, these euphemisms lose their effect, and sharpen the reader's awareness of deceptive language. Furthermore, government euphemisms have the practical advantage that they allow us to distinguish between the temporary incarceration camps under Army jurisdiction (i.e. Assembly Centers) and the long-term inland incarceration camps administered by the WRA (i.e. Relocation Camps) without using these long-winded phrases. For these reasons I will use "Assembly Center" and "Relocation Camp" occasionally, but write them with initial capitals, to make clear that the terms are not to be taken literally.

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21 Recent works focusing on different ways of presenting the incarceration include bilingual picture books such as Amy Lee-Tai, Felicia Hoshino: *A Place Where Sunflowers Grow*, San Francisco: Children's Book Press, 2006, novels such as John Hamamura's *Color of the Sea*, New York: St. Martin's Press, 2006, and books that combine primary sources with scholarly analysis, such as Karen L. Ishizuka: *Lost & Found: Reclaiming the Japanese American Incarceration*, Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2006, and Lawson Fusao Inada (ed.): *Only What We Could Carry. The Japanese American Internment Experience*, Berkeley: Heyday Books, 2000. In addition, various documentaries and movies, including Academy Award winning *Days of Waiting* (1990, dir. Steven Okazaki), and the highly acclaimed *Snow Falling on Cedars* (1999, dir. Scott Hicks).

22 A telling indicator for the coinage in Germany, albeit by no means a conclusive one, is the item list one gets under the subject heading "Konzentrationslager." The electronic catalog of the Thuringian State Library in Jena, for example, lists 105 items, 103 of them referring indiscriminately to either concentration camps or death camps of the Third Reich. Of the other two books, one provides an overviews of the history of concentration camps but does not include the camps for Japanese Americans during World War II (Andrej J. Kaminski: *Konzentrationslager 1896 bis heute. Geschichte, Funktion, Typologie*, München: R, Piper , ²1990). The other book is Joël Kotek, Pierre Rigoulot: *Das Jahrhundert der Lager*, Berlin: Econ Ullstein List Verlag, 2001 (a translation of *Le siècle des camps* (2000)). Kotek and Rigolout dedicate a full chapter to the incarceration of Japanese Americans during World War II. They argue, for the same reasons I outlined, that concentration camp is the proper nomenclature for these camps. But while the book as a whole is illuminating, the chapter on the incarceration of Japanese Americans is flawed by a number of wrong and misleading facts. For example, on page 432 it says that in 1940 some "240,000 Japanese lived in the United States, 77,000 of whom held American citizenship." However, according to the census of 1940, less than 127,000 Japanese and Americans of Japanese descent lived in the United States (Hawaii was a Territory). Also, by summing up U.S. citizens and aliens as "Japanese" (U.S. citizenship is merely an attribute to Japanese nationality), the authors imply the very same paradigm of unassimilability that the architects of incarceration employed to justify their actions. In addition there are numerous mistakes that are probably to be ascribed to the translators. For example, *Executive Order* 9066 becomes *Executive Act* 9066, *U.S. Attorney General* Francis Biddle becomes *Attorney General of California*, *WRA* becomes *WAR*, and so on.

After this excursus into terminology, I will outline major currents and debates in the historical discourse; this also serves to demonstrate the topicality of the wartime incarceration. The main watershed in historiography goes back to the civil rights movement of the late 1960s and early 1970s, when revisionist historians for the first time argued that the episode was not merely a tragic mistake but part of a pattern of systematic government discrimination against racial groups in the United States.[23] Today, merely a handful of scholars and journalists contest this premise.[24] Yet the debate was revived only recently, in 2004, by the release of the book *In Defense of Internment*, written by Michelle Malkin, a frequent FOX news contributor.[25] In her book Malkin claims to "set the historical record straight."[26] She challenges the view that the West Coast evacuation was the result of wartime hysteria and race prejudice, arguing that given the threat of espionage and sabotage the summary incarceration of Japanese Americans was the only feasible response.[27]

Although her argument can easily be repudiated, *In Defense of Internment* became a *New York Times* bestseller. Hence, while as a historical analysis her book has little value, it is still a telling document about the political culture of the contemporary United States, particularly about the fear of terrorists after the attacks of September 11, 2001. The success of her book is emblematic for the general phenomenon that contemporary discussions of politics (as well as race relations, gender, and class) influence our core beliefs about our own history, and vice versa. In the case of Malkin's book, the topicality of the wartime incarceration stems from the parallels between the attack on Pearl Harbor and the attack on New York's Twin Towers, and the resulting debate on national security versus civil

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23 While revisionist historians agree that the summary incarceration was needless, their accounts vary in style and tone. One group summed up as liberal sympathizers; see, for example, Morton Grodzins: *Americans Betrayed: Politics and the Japanese Evacuation*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1949; Audrie Girdner, Anne Loftis: *The Great Betrayal. The Evacuation of the Japanese-Americans during World War II,* New York: Macmillan, 1969; Michi Weglyn: *Years of Infamy: The Untold Story of America's Concentration Camps*, New York: Morrow Quill Paperbacks Inc., 1976. While this does not impair the value of their research, they distinguish themselves from more sedate and matter-of-fact accounts, for instance, Roger Daniels: *Concentration Camps: North America. Japanese in the United States and Canada during World War II*, Malabar: Krieger Publishing Company, 1981; Douglas W. Nelson: *Heart Mountain. The History of an American Concentration Camp*, Madison: The State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1976; Peter Irons: *Justice at War*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1983.

24 That so few contested this premise is clearly due to the abundance of empirical evidence supporting the claim of revisionist historians. The most notorious dissenter is probably Lillian Baker. See, for example, Lillian Baker: *The Concentration Camp Conspiracy: A Second Pearl Harbor*, Lawndale: AFHA Publications, 1981. The preface says: "This book's aim is: a) to uncover the big lie; b) provide facts and documentation to allow The Congress to justifiably deny unjustified monetary reparations; c) expose the persons behind the 'redress & reparations' movement; and d) uphold and preserve the HONOR OF OUR COUNTRY." (p. i) Trying to repudiate the findings of the CWRIC, Baker abandons all principles of sound research and presents a work that is sloppy and naïve to the point of being entertaining. Scholars who dissent but largely adhere to scholarly principles include Page Smith: *Democracy on Trial. The Japanese American Evacuation and Relocation in World War II*, New York: Simon & Schuster, 1995, and Dwight D. Murphey: "The Relocation of Japanese Americans Was Not a Racist or Shameful Episode," in *Japanese American Internment Camps*, ed. William Dudley, San Diego: Greenhaven Press, 2002, pp. 56-71. However, these works, too, are flawed methodologically and fail to stand up to the more exhaustive and conclusive studies listed above.

25 Michelle Malkin: *In Defense of Internment. The Case for "Racial Profiling" in World War II and the War on Terror,* Washington, D.C.: Regnery Publishing Inc., 2004.

26 Malkin: *In Defense of Internment,* p. xvi.

27 A cursory examination of her work, however, shows that it is a textbook polemic, replete with half-truths, loosely applied terminology, non-sequiturs, and distortions of fact. That her argument is untenable has been demonstrated by Eric L. Muller and Greg Robinson. For their highly illuminating debate with Michelle Malkin see http://www.isthatlegal.org/Muller_and_Robinson_on_Malkin.html (consulted 03/30/2007).

liberties. Unfortunately, Malkin's book exploits history by submitting sound research and stringent analysis to political ideology and personal agenda. The works of most revisionist historians, by contrast, first of all seek to further our understanding of the past, before they denote analogies to contemporary issues. To discuss exhaustively the historiography of the wartime incarceration in its relation to contemporary discourses would lead us far away from the main road we are taking in this introduction. However, the above discussion makes clear that the wartime incarceration represents a topical complex of events, and it will inevitably remain so since issues such as national security, civil liberty, and identity are always contested.

Returning to developments in historiography, apart from the re-evaluation of the decision-making process and the role of national security, there is another significant tendency discernable. Whereas historians up to around 1980 mainly analyzed the motives and policies of government officials, later the overarching concern of scholars shifted to the evacuees' responses to forced mass exclusion.[28] The present study picks up the debate on resistance, a central aspect of this tendency which first rose to prominence in the early 1970s.

The first two historians specifically discussing resistance were Douglas W. Nelson (1970) and Roger Daniels (1971).[29] Their views were taken up and refined by Gary Okihiro in his essay *Japanese Resistance in America's Concentration Camps: A Re-evaluation* (1973), in which he explicitly challenged the image of the Japanese-American inmate as loyal and subject victim, a view promoted in the majority of earlier accounts.[30] Okihiro proposed that the assumptions of the revisionist histories of slave and colonized groups provide a more realistic basis for an analysis of Japanese reaction to concentration camp authorities. Post-colonial studies show that African and slave societies tended "to resist externally imposed change of their institutions, that these acts of resistance are continuous and that they are effective."[31] Okihiro argued that Japanese Americans, too, had a vital and resilient tradition of resisting oppression, and that resistance was part of the historical legacy of the anti-immigrant movement on the West Coast.[32] His hypothesis inspired a number of studies on the pre-war communities, which confirm that patterns of cultural resistance were established long before the

28 For a bibliographical essay on works up to 1975, see Roger Daniels: "American Historians and East Asian Immigrants," in *The Asian American: The Historical Experience*, ed. Norris Hundley, Santa Barbara: Clio Press, 1976, pp. 1-25. A synopsis of historical perspectives up to 2000 can be found in Alice Yang Murray (ed.): *What did the Internment of Japanese Americans mean?*, Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2000, pp. 20-26. For a select bibliography of books published since the issue of redress was resolved, see Roger Daniels: "Incarceration, Redress, Reconsiderations: Reviewing the Story of the Japanese-Americans," *The Immigration and Ethnic History Newsletter* Vol. 37 (2005), p. 8.

29 Nelson's virtually unchanged 1970 MA thesis was published as Douglas W. Nelson: *Heart Mountain. The History of an American Concentration Camp*, Madison: The State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1976. Roger Daniels: *Concentration Camps USA: Japanese Americans and World War II*, New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1971, see especially the last paragraph of chapter 6.

30 Gary Y. Okihiro: "Japanese Resistance in America's Concentration Camps: A Re-evaluation," *Amerasia Journal* Vol. 1 (1973), pp. 20-34. The seminal work on the orthodox interpretation of resistance is Dorothy S. Thomas, Richard S. Nishimoto: *The Spoilage*, Berkeley: University of California Press, ²1969 (orig. 1946).

31 Okihiro: *Japanese Resistance*, p. 21.

32 There was no (post-)colonial situation in the United States in literal sense. What these so-called "post-colonial," or ethnic, historians argue is that the results of post-colonial studies can also be transferred fruitfully to countries and groups that have never been colonisers nor colonised, at least in the formal sense.

creation of the camps in reaction to racial discrimination.[33]

At the same time as these historians placed resistance into the context of the pre-war struggles in the American West, they also reassessed the nature of resistance. They argued that before World War II resistance took form in the preservation of Japanese institutions and values, and that this was also the true nature of resistance in Relocation Camps. As Okihiro put it, "Resistance was rechanneled away from open rebellion into ethnic beliefs and practices, which, because of the nature of oppression, themselves constituted resistance."[34] In other words, following pre-war patterns, resistance in Relocation Camps was caused by discriminatory measures against pro-Japanese elements and resulted in an upsurge of Japanese ethnic identity. Hence, for historians who assume an analogy to a post-colonial situation, culture explains both the *cause* of resistance as well as the *goal* of resistance.[35]

Related to this paradigmatic shift, post-colonial historians also re-examined the tripartite picture of the Japanese-American prison community as it was promulgated by the traditional interpretation of resistance. Early scholars qualified Issei generally as pro-Japan, equated Kibei with pro-fascist troublemakers, and characterized Nisei as "good" citizens, assimilated and pro-American.[36] This community picture constituted the basis for the two classic explanations of resistance. First, resistance was commonly attributed to pro-fascist Kibei who used bullying tactics to coerce others into joining their protest. The other explanation suggested that resistance was merely an expression of pent-up pressures due to mismanagement that would dissolve once the grievances had been removed.[37] By contrast, post-colonial historians demonstrate that there was an underlying discontent and potential for resistance, no matter how efficient the camp was run. They also argue that resistance was carried by a wide majority and not by a few maladjusted individuals. Finally, they show that the most important expression of resistance was the struggle to preserve community values.

Although Okihiro's essay lies more than thirty years in the past, there is a striking lack of micro-studies testing the historical validity of his claims.[38] The overarching concern of this study,

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33 See, for example, John Modell: *The Economics and Politics of Racial Accommodation: The Japanese of Los Angeles, 1900-1942*, Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1977, as well as Louis Fiset and Gail M. Nomura (eds.): *Nikkei in the Pacific Northwest. Japanese Americans and Japanese Canadians in the Twentieth Century*, Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2005.

34 Okihiro: *Religion and Resistance*, p. 233.

35 Arthur A. Hansen, David A. Hacker: "The Manzanar Riot: An Ethnic Perspective," *Amerasia Journal* Vol. 2 (1974), pp. 112-157, Gary Y. Okihiro: "Religion and Resistance in America's Concentration Camps," *Phylon* Vol. 45 (1984), pp. 220-233.

36 *Issei* are the first generation Japanese immigrants. Born in Japan, they were barred by law from becoming U.S. citizens. *Nisei* denotes the second generation Japanese Americans, born in the USA and citizens by right of birth. Nisei is used throughout this work synonymously with "American-born" and, therefore, includes the *Sansei* (third generation). *Kibei* are Nisei who were sent back to Japan for education or employment. Kibei is a quasi-Japanese term composed of the characters "ki" (return) and "bei" (the first character in the term "Beikoku," the term for the United States.) *Nikkei* is an umbrella term for all people of Japanese lineage.

37 Okihiro: *Japanese Resistance*, pp. 20-21.

38 Most of the recent overviews on the wartime incarceration maintain that passive resistance was a common feature in Relocation Camps but rarely submit that the preservation and revival of Japanese culture was the central aspect of resistance. For case studies confirming the ethnic perspective see Hansen and Hacker, *The Manzanar Riot*, pp. 112-157 and Gary Y. Okihiro: "Tule Lake under Martial Law: A Study in Japanese Resistance," *Journal of Ethnic Studies* Vol. 5 (1977), pp. 71-85. Another important work on resistance – though the book does not fit the ethnic perspective – is Eric Muller's

therefore, is to determine to what extent the findings of post-colonial historians hold true for the Tanforan Assembly Center. In this context I will ascertain the degree of mobilization as well as causes, aims, and means of resistance. Defining resistance as any conscious act of disobedience to an external authority, I will take into account phenomena such as anti-administration rumors, jokes about appointed personnel, factional conflicts among the evacuees, and nonparticipation in government programs, which all can be interpreted as forms of resistance to administrative dominance. In this context I will be explain why resistance in Tanforan remained peaceful and did not galvanize the inmates to mass protests. Further, I will examine the development of social patterns within the community, paying special attention to generational and cultural conflicts.

In addition, this study asks a number of questions that are not explicitly addressed by the ethnic perspective, but that further our understanding of this episode: What other strategies, apart from resistance, did the penned-up community employ to cope with captivity? How did the evacuees make sense of their imprisonment? What distinguished Tanforan, a temporary camp under Army rule, from the more permanent WRA Relocation Camps? By answering these questions we will capture the essence of the experience of the inmates and set forth a canon of issues that might be used as a model to compare different Assembly Centers.

Finally, this study argues that the Assembly Center phase was an important stage in the wartime incarceration as a whole. Surveying existent studies one finds numerous works on Relocation Camps, while there is a notable scarcity of works on Assembly Centers. Presumably this is because Assembly Centers posed merely a makeshift solution while the long-term Relocation Camps are considered the "proper" experience.[39] Yet the Assembly Center phase was a most formative period for the Japanese Americans, being the prologue to mass incarceration which would last, in most cases, until the end of the war. As a War Relocation Community analyst aptly stated:

> In order to gain a greater understanding of the attitudes and reactions of the evacuees as they came to the relocation centers, it is necessary to study the events and administration of each assembly center. The assembly centers represent the initial experiences of evacuation.[40]

Having outlined the goals of this study, the following section discusses the methods used. How to analyze the historical reality of an Assembly Center, whose salient features are a restricted, contiguous

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Free to Die for Their Country: The Story of the Japanese American Draft Resisters in World War II, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001.

39 There is no study on Tanforan so far, only a chapter in Sandra C. Taylor: *Jewel of the Desert: Japanese American Internment at Topaz*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993, pp. 62-88. There are two studies on other Assembly Centers: Anthony L. Lehman: *Birthright of Barbed Wire. The Santa Anita Assembly Center for the Japanese*, Los Angeles: Westernlore Press, 1970, and Francis Feeley: *A Strategy of Dominance: The History of an American Concentration Camp, Pomona, California*, New York: Brandywine Press, 1995. Apart from these two studies, Louis Fiset currently works on a study on the Puyallup Assembly Center.

40 Anne O. Freed, Community Analysis Section, WRA: *Summary of Available Data on Assembly Centers, July 14, 1943*, as cited by Takeya Mizuno: "Journalism under Military Guards and Searchlights: Newspaper Censorship at Japanese American Assembly Camps during World War II," *Journalism History* Vol. 29 (2003), p. 99.

time and space?[41] In order to reconstruct camp life, and to answer the questions of this study, I will provide detailed analyses of everyday interactions, placing each into its respective context. I argue that the propelling forces of Tanforan's history are neither administrators (the "great men" in the *histoire événémentielle*), nor the silent, anonymous masses of inmates who, as some social historians might argue, can only be measured by numbers, and who act only as classes or collectives. Instead, the basic units of my analysis are sentient individuals as actors with their own agenda and strategies. In short, "small people" and everyday interactions form the basis of my analysis. Thus I write a *microhistory*.[42]

Conducting a microanalysis of Tanforan means to scrutinize the unfolding of events through a framework of constantly changing interactions and contexts, yet without dispensing with efforts to formalize and generalize. This has several ramifications. First, by focusing on empirically verifiable mechanisms and microscopic social processes, the findings of post-colonial historians can be verified without remaining captured in their premises. Second, this approach enables us to disclose essential phenomena of camp life that have hitherto remained underrated or even unnoticed. Third, as the study abandons and turns to dynamic forms, the reader will have to put up with a good deal of incoherence and non-linearity, which are found in macrohistories that commonly follow the pattern of grand narratives. Fourth, this approach means that I have to find ways to connect disjointed everyday discourses, place them into context, and to explain variations within each given context. In brief, our task will be to "conceptualize disorder."[43]

Finally, when analyzing the power relations between the incarcerated and their keepers, I will draw on Foucault's concept of the "microphysics of power," as put forward in his study *Surveiller et punir: Naissance de la prison* (1975).[44] Foucault argues that power is a modus of relationship that develops, shifts, and works in multiple directions. Following Foucault, I will consider power as a *strategy*, not a *property*.[45] Adopting Foucault's dynamic approach allows us to disclose power relations between prisoners and keepers in everyday life, to determine the role of coercion, and to analyze the strategies the inmates used to oppose coercion.

Having thus laid out the methods, I will now comment on the sources I use in this study. The main sources pertaining to Tanforan are the records of the Japanese Evacuation and Resettlement Study (JERS), a research project conducted during World War II under the tutelage of Dr. Dorothy S.

41 The period under discussion takes up about five months, and the analysis is confined to the interaction of about 8,000 people – some 7,800 evacuees, and less than 100 wardens and administrators – living and working in Tanforan.
42 Jürgen Schlumbohm (ed.): *Mikrogeschichte – Makrogeschichte. Komplementär oder inkommensurabel?*, Göttingen: Wallstein-Verlag, 1998, pp. 16-22.
43 Fredrik Barth: *Balinese Worlds*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993, pp. 3-8. See also Winfried Schulze: "Mikrohistorie versus Makrohistorie? Anmerkungen zu einem aktuellen Thema," in *Historische Methode. Beiträge zur Historik, Bd. 5*, eds. Christian Meier and Jörn Rüsen, München: Deutscher Taschenbuch Verlag, 1988, pp. 319-341.
44 Michael Foucault: *Surveiller et punir: Naissance de la prison*, Paris: Gallimard, 1975, pp. 31-35.
45 Foucault's concept of power represents as a conscious departure from Karl Marx, who asserted that power is the property of a group, typically the economic privileged. This privileged class, according to Marx, is the source of power, and in turn power is bound to the privileged, as property is bound to its owner.

Thomas, a professor of rural sociology at the University of California, Berkeley. As the war erupted Dr. Thomas anticipated the exclusion policy and got funding for a study whose overarching purpose was to trace the changes in the Japanese-American community during incarceration. Altogether more than 30 researchers assembled materials on various Assembly Centers and Relocation Camps.[46] The project resulted in two studies focusing on three Relocation Camps as well as post-war adjustments.[47] Since much of the data remained unused, the collection of original data was gradually made available to other research workers. Today the Bancroft Library at the University of California is the main repository for all unpublished material.

JERS records concerning Tanforan contain more than 6,000 pages of microfilmed primary sources. The bulk of these sources consists of diaries, correspondence, and informal notes assembled by seventeen inmates. In the early phase of the JERS project there were neither formal guidelines nor specific questions; Dr. Thomas told the researchers to record anything they deemed worth mentioning.[48] Consequently, the JERS records pertaining to Tanforan are highly heterogeneous in content and style, ranging from purely descriptive observations to interpretive analyses. Some accounts are actually private diaries and letters, added to the JERS collection after the war, written without the awareness that one day they might be used for scholarly research. Many of them deal with intimate issues – thoughts, feelings and private conversations – giving valuable insights into everyday social interactions and the emotional state of the individual. Some of the texts even have a literary value. Other accounts contain detached observations. The sum of these notes constitute a canon of issues that the inmates deemed relevant, and by adhering to this canon I will be able to get close to the historical experience. Another advantage for the present study is the diversity of perspectives, which allows us to shed light on events from different angles. The major problem, epistemologically speaking, will be to provide a synthesis of these multifarious perspectives while giving due attention to individual experiences.

Another feature of the JERS records, indicated above, is that they are very close to the *experience* of incarceration. Unlike memoirs and oral history interviews, JERS records are written without the knowledge of future events such as the duration of their incarceration or the redress movement. Such hindsight would have turned the fresh impressions into colored memories. The following quote, taken from an inmate's final entry in his diary, illustrates this point:

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46 Dorothy S. Thomas, Richard S. Nishimoto: *The Spoilage*, Berkeley: University of California Press, ²1969, pp. i-v. Part of the JERS project are the "Kikuchi Life Histories," interviews of sixty-four Nisei who resetttled during the war in Chicago. Recorded by Charles Kikuchi between spring 1943 and summer 1945 these autobiographic narratives illuminate individual experiences and show how the Nisei made sense of their times. For an interpretation focusing on identity formation, see David K. Yoo: *Growing Up Nisei. Race, Generation, and Culture among Japanese Americans of California, 1924-49*, Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2000, pp. 158-171.

47 Dorothy S. Thomas, Richard S. Nishimoto: *The Spoilage*, Berkeley: University of California Press, ²1969, and Dorothy S. Thomas: *The Salvage: Japanese American Evacuation and Resettlement*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1952.

48 See Kikuchi: "Through the JERS Looking Glass. A Personal View from Within," in *Views from Within. The Japanese American Evacuation and Resettlement Study*, ed. Yuji Ichioka, Los Angeles: University of California, 1989, p. 189.

> A brief retrospection invites various moods and reactions to a life totally new and different. Some day I was happy, other days sad, and moody, and sometimes cynical. As I look back into the diary, I feel like crossing out certain things because I don't feel so gay now as I did at that time, or vice-versa.[49]

Since this study focuses on the *history* and not on the *memories* of the wartime incarceration, the JERS records represent an indispensable source for our analysis.

The seventeen chroniclers of Tanforan were all second-generation Japanese Americans.[50] Almost all were between twenty and thirty years of age at the time of their incarceration. Most were students, male and female, and politically progressive, though to varying degrees. As prisoners these individuals were far from objective observers, and the records are replete with contradicting, emotional and ambiguous observations. A JERS researcher later recalled that "complete detachment and objectivity was the ideal goal, but not always completely possible."[51] This is, put mildly, slightly understated. However, since objective history is impossible – not only because our informants are unreliable, but also because the historian's mind is grounded ineluctably in experience – this multitude of partial and biased perspectives represent no handicap. On the contrary, it accommodates our approach to reconstruct historical experience by contrasting individual experiences and concentrating on social networks, conversational connections and power relations.[52]

The main disadvantage of the JERS study is the absence of Issei accounts. However, since most researchers lived in family units, there is an abundance of references to the Issei. Although we have no direct access to the Issei's view – all information is mediated through the eyes of the Nisei – much can be deducted. What has been said about the Issei also goes for Tanforan's keepers. They, too, left no personal records telling us about their view. However, the evacuees comment thoroughly on the wardens and administrators. This spectrum of judgments, which are by no means univocal, enables us to evaluate individual attitudes and to make generalizations.

Aside from observations by evacuees, the JERS collection contains camp bulletins, proclamations, the camp newspaper, and protocols of meetings between evacuee representatives and the camp administration, that provide essential data on the physical setting, the administrative frame, and on the relation between the incarcerated and their custodians. In addition to the JERS records, I will draw on a number of edited diaries and memoirs. Lastly, the Army's *Final Report* is the single most important source for juxtaposing the human experience with the de-humanized perspective of a bureaucratic apparatus, which sees the exclusion and incarceration merely as a logistical problem.

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49 *Diary*, Ben Iijima, September 18, 1942, JERS: 17:519. Fortunately, Iijima refrained from "editing" his notes.

50 The contributors are Grace Fujii, Doris Hayashi, Fred Hoshiyama, Ben Iijima, Charles Kikuchi, Michio Kunitani, Kenny Murase, Haruo Najima, James Sadoka, Tamotsu Shibutani, Tomiko Shibutani, Nobumitsu Takahashi, Henry Tani, Kay Uchida, Earle T. Yusa, plus at least two anonymous contributors.

51 Charles Kikuchi: *Through the JERS Looking Glass*, p. 188.

52 This ontology, so-called *relational realism*, once predominated in social science, has become somewhat unfashionable among historians. See Charles Tilly: "Micro, Macro, or Megrim?," in *Mikrogeschichte – Makrogeschichte. Komplementär oder inkommensurabel?*, ed. Jürgen Schlumbohm, Göttingen: Wallstein-Verlag, 1998, pp. 38-41.

While the main purpose of this work is a microcosmic study of the Tanforan Assembly Center, I start from the premise of revisionist historians that the incarceration was a result of half-a-century of mistrust and discrimination, and that the camps were an extension of the West Coast society. Therefore, the first two chapters introduce the wider context of the Japanese-American incarceration. Chapter 1 delineates the three decades of Japanese immigration up to the immigration halt in 1924. It reminds us that panicky acts in a national crisis emerge not just from immediate insecurity but also from deeper prejudices and fears. The second chapter traces central developments in the Japanese-American community and outlines the history from the attack on Pearl Harbor up to the incarceration of the West Coast Japanese Americans. Both chapters are written from a macrohistorical perspective, drawing mainly from the rich canon of secondary literature. Towards the end of chapter 2 I will "zoom in" to the San Francisco Bay Area, and finally to the Tanforan Assembly Center, thereby switching from the macro- to the micro-perspective. The following six chapters constitute the main body of this thesis, employing the previously outlined methods and sources. Chapters 3 and 4 deal with aspects of physical subsistence; lodging, food, sanitation, health and the organization of everyday needs. Chapter 5 inspects security and policing. Chapter 6 scrutinizes everyday life. Chapter 7 analyzes the camp press, while chapter 8 examines Tanforan's self-government.

1 – Japanese in America and the Anti-Japanese Movement

> *Injustice has been the only American way of meeting a race problem. We dealt unjustly by the Indian, and he died. We dealt unjustly with the Negro, and he submits. If Japanese ever come in sufficient numbers to constitute a race problem, we shall deal unjustly with them – and they will neither die nor submit. This is the bigness of the problem.*
>
> – Chester Rowell[53]

There are two main reasons for reviewing the anti-Japanese movement on the West Coast of the United States. Most importantly, the uprooting of 112,000 Japanese Americans in the months following Pearl Harbor cannot be fully understood except in the context of the half-century of distrust and discrimination which preceded their removal. The other reason to recall the entrenched pattern of anti-Japanese sentiment is the fact that it persisted within the camps. In other words, the interaction between Caucasian custodians and Asian charges in Assembly Centers and Relocation Camps followed patterns that had been established during the three decades of Japanese immigration. Therefore, this chapter sketches the history of Japanese immigrants up to the immigration stop in 1924, focusing on the anti-Japanese movement.

Substantial emigration from Japan began only after 1884, the year in which the Meiji government lifted its ban on emigration. The bulk of emigrants to the New World headed for the Kingdom of Hawaii in order to work as contract laborers on sugarcane plantations. In the decade after 1884 some 30,000 arrived.[54] The Hawaiian story needs to be mentioned, because the island kingdom – after its annexation in 1898 as an American Territory – served as an important staging point in the migration to the North American mainland; many Japanese immigrants came from Hawaii rather than directly from Japan. The migration of these lower-class rural Japanese, drawn by higher wages on the mainland, was spurred by the demand for low-wage labor following the exclusion of the Chinese in 1882. Also, before 1908 there was no effective immigration legislation preventing entry into the United States.[55]

However, before these farm workers started to have a visible impact on the agrarian Pacific Coast, most Japanese Americans settled down in thriving coastal towns such as Los Angeles, San Francisco, and Seattle. As early as 1870 the Japanese government opened a consulate in San Francisco, but significant numbers of Japanese did not arrive until 1890, when the U.S. census enumerated 2,039 Japanese in the entire United States, about half of them residing in California (see Table 1).

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53 *Chester H. Rowell Analyzes the Problem of Japanese Immigration in California (1914)*, in Sucheng Chan, Spencer Olin (eds.): *Major Problems in California History. Documents and Essays*, Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1997, p. 202.
54 Hilary Conroy: *The Japanese Frontier in Hawaii, 1868-1898*, New York: Arno Press, 1978.
55 Roger Daniels: *Asian America: Chinese and Japanese in the United States since 1850*, Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1988, pp. 100-101, 107-109.

Among the first arrivals were upper-class students and other travelers, permitted to go by the Meiji government because they were viewed as "healthy, literate, and upstanding people who would reflect well on Japan's national honor."[56] They were sojourners rather than immigrants, who came to learn English, curious to discover an alien country, and intending to return after an adventurous stay. A few emigrated because they were shed by Japanese society; mostly Christians, and a few political refugees. They came in the proverbial search for freedom and democracy, hoping to settle down permanently and to live free of repression. An unknown number of Japanese emigrated to avoid military conscription. Most immigrants, however, were displaced farmers who were looking for economic betterment and an opportunity to own and farm land. As most of those early arrivals lacked sufficient funds to lease or buy land immediately, they first established toeholds as shopkeepers, hotel managers or restaurant owners. A few women were brought in to serve as prostitutes. During harvest season, many toiled as agricultural laborers. The initial employment for many urban people was in domestic service where little English was required. Gardening, too, was a profession easily accessible to Japanese newcomers, in which they quickly won the favor of their employers. [57]

These early immigrants were young, usually male, and they made little money, about $25-$30 a month, scarcely enough to return home. Initially, the majority of Japanese settlers intended to save their money so that they could return to Japan quickly and buy land there, and a large number did so, following the pattern of other immigrant groups.[58] But many Japanese realized that fortunes were not earned quickly and changed their mind to establish a permanent foothold.[59] Moreover, Japanese immigrants were predisposed to the United States not only for economic reasons: The United States and its institutions were deeply admired by the Japanese; in Japanese government textbooks, for example, Benjamin Franklin and Abraham Lincoln were models to be emulated.[60] All this contributed to the growth of a permanent immigrant community, which at the same time retained strong cultural links to its home country.[61]

Although numerically these immigrant pioneers comprised less than a drop in the bucket of the growing Pacific Coast population, the history of pre-1900 urban communities already illustrates two recurring and central aspects of Japanese immigration to the United States: the anti-Japanese

56 Sandra C. Taylor: *Jewel of the Desert: Japanese American Internment at Topaz*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993, p. 2.
57 Daniels: *Asian America*, pp. 104-107.
58 Page Smith: *Democracy on Trial. The Japanese American Evacuation and Relocation in World War II*, New York: Simon & Schuster, 1995, pp. 52-53. On the relation between economic success and return migration see: Masao Suzuki: "Success Story? Japanese Immigrant Economic Achievement and Return Migration, 1920-1930," *Journal of Economic History* Vol. 55 (1995), pp. 889-901.
59 There exists the influential and lasting notion that Asian immigrants came merely as temporary sojourners to the United States, and still continue do so. For a critical discussion of this idea see Eugene F. Wong: "Asian American Middleman Minority Theory: The Framework of an American Myth," *Journal of Ethnic Studies* Vol. 13 (1985), pp. 51-88.
60 Thomas Sowell: *Ethnic America*, New York: Basic Books Inc., 1981, p. 157; Yasuo Wakatsuki: "Japanese Emigration to the United States, 1866-1924," *Perspectives in American History* Vol. 12 (1979), p. 465.
61 Eiichiro Azuma: *Between Two Empires. Race, History and Transnationalism in Japanese America*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005, pp. 17-34. Taylor: *Jewel of the Desert*, pp. 2-5.

movement on the Pacific Coast, and, inextricably linked to it, the Japanese government's concern for its subjects abroad.

As Roger Daniels, a leading historian of the Japanese in America noted, "[f]rom the beginning of trans-Pacific migration, the Japanese government had evinced great interest in the way its subjects were treated abroad."[62] Japan's vigilance against discriminatory treatment was less for humanitarian reasons but rather motivated by the desire to protect her prestige as an aspiring nation. Unlike China, a country torn by inner conflicts and exploited by western colonial powers, Japan had set upon a path to become a great power herself, in order to evade the very degradation China suffered. After being forced to open to the West in 1854, Japan underwent a rigorous modernization, following the example of European states such as Great Britain and Prussia. In foreign policy, too, Japan dissociated herself from the victimized Asian nations and tended to side with western colonial powers; during the Boxer Rebellion, for example, Tokyo dispatched the largest contingent of soldiers to aid the Eight-Nation Alliance in putting down the uprising.

By 1905, when Japan defeated Russia, Nippon had become the dominant military power in the Western Pacific. Consequently, Japan expected its citizens to be treated like citizens of any other great power; dignity and respect became a question of national honor. When the Chinese exclusion act was signed in 1882, there was little that victimized China could do about it. In contrast, every measure designed to discriminate against Japanese immigrants was carefully scrutinized and promptly responded to by policy makers in Tokyo.

Whereas the Japanese encountered derogatory and racist comments as early as in the 1860s, nothing that can be called an anti-Japanese movement existed until the 1890s. It was in San Francisco, the city with the most important *Nihonmachi,* or "Japan town", where the first brief but significant anti-Japanese flurry occurred between 1891 and 1893. The flurry was triggered by depressed economic conditions combined with the arrival of a few hundred rather ragged immigrants from Japan proper. As the press denounced the new labor immigration, Sutemi Chinda, the new consul general, tried to find jobs for those whom the authorities threatened to bar. He then informed his superiors in Tokyo, that any passenger without fifteen dollars in his possession would likely be rejected and advised port officials in Japan to prevent the emigration of impoverished emigrants.[63]

The negative newspaper headlines subsided eventually, and long-term political ramifications failed to appear. Only the San Francisco Board of Education took brief issue with the Japanese: On June 10, 1893, the board passed a resolution ordering all persons of Japanese race to attend Chinese schools. Upon protest of the Japanese consul general, who pointed out that there were only between forty and fifty Japanese students in the whole school system, the school board eventually reversed its

62 Daniels: *Asian America*, p. 103.
63 Daniels: *Asian America*, pp. 109-111. For Japan's emigration restrictions see Mitziko Sawada: "Culprits and Gentlemen: Meiji Japan's Restrictions of Emigrants to the United States, 1891-1909," *Pacific Historical Review* Vol. 60 (1991), pp. 339-359.

action.[64] The transience of this first wave of anti-Japanese sentiment was surely due to the very small numbers of Japanese immigrants. As mentioned earlier, the 1890 census found that a mere 1,147 Japanese lived in California (590 in San Francisco) and less than another 1,000 in the rest of the country.[65]

The second wave of anti-Japanese sentiment occurred at the turn of the century and demonstrated how easily the anti-Chinese tradition in California, and on the West Coast as a whole, became an anti-Oriental tradition. During the campaign for further extension of the Chinese Exclusion Act, due to expire in 1902, some of those involved in the campaign wanted to keep out all Asians. James D. Phelan, a progressive Democrat who was then mayor of San Francisco, insisted that the struggles against the Chinese and Japanese were the same, arguing that "the Japanese are starting the same tide of immigration which we thought we had checked twenty years ago," and that "Chinese and Japanese […] are not the stuff of which American citizens can be made."[66] But again the numbers of Japanese were too low to bring about tangible anti-Japanese legislation. The prime goal of the campaign was the exclusion of the Chinese, and this goal was achieved when on April 29, 1902, Theodore Roosevelt made the exclusion permanent.[67]

By the mid 1890s, the urban locus of the Japanese-American community began to be replaced by a rural one. It began with a trickle of laborers from Hawaii, who had completed their contracts on the sugarcane plantations. After 1898, Hawaii's annexation by the United States made further migration to the mainland possible. As mentioned earlier, there was no effective immigration legislation to keep them out; though a 1891 statute barred the entry of any paupers likely to become a public charge, such as prostitutes and contract laborers, those provisions were almost impossible to enforce. Japanese immigrants quickly became an important factor on the agrarian Pacific Coast and would remain so until their removal in 1942. [68]

Since a great many contemporary publicists wrote about the "yellow flood" of Japanese immigrants, it is necessary to note the numerical insignificance, in both absolute and relative terms, of Japanese coming to the United States: According to the immigration data of the federal government in the peak period of immigration between 1901 and 1908, 125,000 immigrants came in, and then about 10,000 a year until the Immigration Act of 1924 barred further immigration from Japan. In the entire period fewer than 300,000 Japanese arrived, many of whom were sojourners rather than immigrants.

64 Donald Teruo Hata: *"Undesirables": Early Immigrants and the Anti-Japanese Movement in San Francisco, 1892-1893, Prelude to Exclusion*, New York: Arno Press, [2]1978, pp. 140-153.
65 For immigrant figures see Table 1.
66 San Francisco *Examiner*, May 8, 1900. As cited by Daniels: *Asian America*, p. 112.
67 It should be noted that, in general, the federal government opposed the West Coast states in their demand to prohibit immigration of Orientals. Both President Hayes and President Arthur vetoed bills that called for permanent exclusion of the Chinese. It took two decades of intense lobbying to convince Congress to pass anti-Japanese legislation. See, for example, Daniel T. Tichenor: *Dividing Lines. The Politics of Immigration Control in America*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2002, pp. 132-143.
68 Daniels: *Asian America*, pp. 107-108.

In comparison, between the end of the Civil War and 1924 some 30 million immigrants came to the United States.[69] In 1907, the heaviest year of immigration from Japan, 30,842 were recorded as entering the United States, just 2.4 percent of the total of immigrants who arrived that year. And even as Japanese settled almost exclusively on the Pacific Coast, in particular California, the data shows that in 1920, the time of their highest incidence, merely one Californian in fifty was Japanese, and about one American in a thousand either came from Japan or was a child of Japanese immigrants.[70]

Yet the anti-Japanese agitation rose to such heights that in just two years it required the intervention of the White House. In February, 1905, the *Chronicle*, the most important paper in San Francisco, began a crusade that lasted for more than a year. In lurid language *Chronicle* headlines warned of raging torrents of Japanese immigrants, and of their inassimilable character: "The Japanese Invasion: The Problem of the Hour"; "The Yellow Peril – How Japanese Crowd Out the White Race"; "Brown Men an Evil in the Public Schools"; "Crime and Poverty Go Hand in Hand With Asiatic Labor."[71]

While irresponsible journalists stirred anti-Japanese feelings on the West Coast, their headlines did little to keep immigrants from coming. Much more important for the exclusion of the Japanese, which was to be decided about by the federal government, were the views of educated middle-class Progressives like Fresno Newspaper editor Chester Harvey Rowell who laid out the pseudo-intellectual foundation for the Japanese exclusion. Their rationale was decisive when it came to convince lawmakers of the necessity to exclude the Japanese. What follows are some of Rowell's quotations from his numerous public remarks:

> [Racial discrimination] is blind and uncontrollable prejudice […] yet social separateness seems to be imposed by the very law of nature. – Race counts more than anything else in the world. It is the mark God placed on those whom he put asunder. It is grounded in the instincts of man, and is not amenable to reason. – Intermarriage between a Japanese and a white would be a sort of international adultery. The instinct of self-preservation of our race demands that its future members shall be members of our race. […] Personally, I think this instinct is wise and beneficial.[72]

Appalling as these remarks appear to the modern reader, at their time such views were rather moderate. There was nothing objectionable in calling for the discrimination, exploitation or expulsion of "racial inferiors." Eugenics had many prominent adherents in the Western world before Nazi Germany used it to justify its racial policies. In fact, in the Congressional debates preceding the Immigration Act of 1924, eugenics played a central role as "experts" advised on the threat of "inferior stock" from Eastern and Southern Europe.[73]

69 Daniels: *Concentration Camps: North America. Japanese in the United States and Canada during World War II*, Malabar (FL): Krieger Publishing Company, [4]1993, p. 5.
70 Daniels: *Asian America*, p. 115. See also Table 2.
71 San Francisco *Chronicle*, February 13-March 13, 1905, passim. As cited by Daniels: *Asian America*, p. 112.
72 As cited by Roger Daniels: *The Politics of Prejudice: The Anti-Japanese Movement in California and the Struggle for Japanese Exclusion,* New York: Atheneum, 1974, pp. 131-132.
73 For a summary of the American eugenics movement between the World Wars see Nancy Ordover: *American Eugenics: Race, Queer Anatomy, and the Science of Nationalism*, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2003, pp. 9-44. The extensive contacts between American and Nazi eugenicists are documented in Stefan Kühl: *The Nazi Connection:*

It was such arguments of educated middle-class Progressives that characterized much of the anti-Japanese movement, as opposed to the anti-Chinese movement, in which arguments were almost all on economic lines. Further evidence for the predominance of racial over economic considerations is the numerical insignificance of Japanese as compared to the significant numbers of Chinese immigrants: In peak times (around 1870) the Chinese comprised perhaps 10 percent of California's population, and almost a quarter of the population of San Francisco. Their economic impact was even greater as almost all of them were adult males. Japanese immigrants, in contrast, peaked at 2.1 percent of California's population (in 1920), where by far the most Japanese lived. Even in the area of highest concentration of their population – Los Angeles County – out of every thousand Angelenos, only sixteen were Japanese. [74]

To be sure, there was an economic argument in the anti-Japanese movement, especially among the trade unionists. In San Francisco, for example, Japanese in the dry-cleaning business and art goods business were in fierce competition with white and Chinese entrepreneurs.[75] In the countryside, newly arrived Japanese agricultural workers competed with Chinese labor gangs.[76] There was little competition with white farmers, however, because Issei farmers usually opened up new lands and introduced new crops.[77] Given the Issei's significant contribution to Californian agriculture, and their inconspicuousness, there was little reason for Californians to complain about the Japanese. Even newspaper editor Rowell asserted: "If white immigrants of equal quality were available, they would be welcomed enthusiastically in unlimited numbers. The opposition to the Japanese is wholly racial."[78]

Having dealt with the ideological foundation of the anti-Japanese movement on the Pacific Coast, I will now turn to the events that lead to the exclusion of the Japanese, which was eventually achieved by a provision inserted into the Immigration Act of 1924. One major issue inciting the exclusionist movement anew was Japan's new status as a world power. As indicated earlier, by 1905 Japan had become a military power to be reckoned with. Most of the overseas Japanese were proud of their homeland's achievements and supported Japan's aggressive stance in world politics.[79] The emperor's birthday was an important holiday and the anniversary of Admiral Togo's victory in the Tushima Straits was celebrated annually. Japanese consular officials were, until perhaps the 1920s, the chief

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Eugenics, American Racism, and German National Socialism, New York: Oxford University Press, ²2002. For a comprehensive account ranging from the beginnings to the present, see Edwin Black: *War Against the Weak. Eugenics and America's Campaign to Create a Master Race*, New York: Thunder's Mouth Press, 2003.

74 Daniels: *Concentration Camps*, pp. 2-3.

75 Taylor: *Jewel of the Desert*, pp. 20-23.

76 Daniels: *Asian America*, pp. 108-109.

77 Ibid., pp. 163-164.

78 *Chester H. Rowell Analyzes the Problem of Japanese Immigration in California, 1914*, in Chan, Olin (eds.): *Major Problems in California History*, p. 203.

79 Exceptions to the rule were political refugees who had to fear prosecution in imperial Japan. Although they comprised a tiny minority of all Japanese Americans, they were well organized in the San Francisco Bay Area, where they had a notable influence on the Japanese-American community. See Yuji Ichioka: "A Buried Past: Early Issei Socialists and the Japanese Community," *Amerasia Journal* Vol. 1 (1971), pp. 1-25.

spokesmen and leaders of Japanese-American communities. This solidarity between the Japanese government and Japanese expatriates was perceived by the American public with mistrust and contributed to the negative image of Japanese Americans in the eyes of educated Americans.[80]

After the Chinese exclusion had been made permanent in 1902, the Japanese immigration issue exploded into national and international prominence and stayed there for two decades. Anti-Asian exclusion leagues were formed, and the Californian legislature endorsed press agitation immediately. Theodore Roosevelt, publicly condemning the "foolish offensiveness" of California's press and legislature, privately agreed with the substance of the exclusionist argument: that the "very frugality, abstemiousness and clannishness [of Japanese laborers] make them formidable to our laboring class."[81] Yet, due to Japan's aforementioned rise to world power, he acted diplomatically. When in 1906 the San Francisco School Board Affair became an international incident, he assured the Japanese ambassador of his regrets and denounced the hostility towards Japanese which he claimed was "limited to a very few places". In his December 1906 annual message he called the agitation "discreditable" and noted that "it might be filled with the gravest consequences to the nation." To straighten out what those consequences might be, the President then hailed Japanese military achievements. He even went so far as to recommend that Congress pass a law allowing naturalization of Japanese who intended to become American citizens.[82]

Roosevelt's statement was denounced by almost the entire western press but no evidence suggests that Roosevelt really wanted naturalization privileges for Japanese Americans. Instead he sought a political settlement that would placate both the Japanese government and public opinion in California. First, he mollified the Californians, promising to stop immigration if the Californian legislature passed no legislations discriminating against the Japanese. Turning to Congress, he introduced a law that would stop immigration from Hawaii. What was left was the increasing immigration from Japan itself, which was addressed in the so-called Gentlemen's Agreement. In this executive agreement of 1908, the Japanese agreed not to issue passports valid for the continental United States to laborers, skilled and unskilled. However, passports could be issued to the parents, wives and children of laborers already resident there.[83]

Although a triumph of diplomacy, the agreement did not solve the tensions between the two major powers in the Pacific. What it did was to change drastically the nature of the Japanese American population in the United States, which would more than double in less than twenty years as many Japanese would bring in "picture brides" and start to have children with them. At the time of the agreement almost 90 percent of the Japanese immigrants were male. By 1924 the sex ratio was

80 Daniels: *Asian America*, pp. 114-115.
81 Ibid., p. 121.
82 Ibid., pp. 121-122. For a comprehensive analysis of Roosevelt's view on the Japanese see Greg Robinson: *By Order of the President: FDR and the Internment of Japanese Americans*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2001, pp. 8-44.
83 Daniels: *Asian America*, pp. 122-126.

beginning to approach a balance. Thus, the Gentlemen's Agreement enabled the rise of a burgeoning Japanese-American community, with its center of gravity slowly but surely shifting towards the American-born second generation.

The Gentlemen's Agreement also placed responsibility on the Japanese government to register and to control the influx of Japanese Americans. Therefore, in February 1909, the Japanese consulate general in San Francisco had the Japanese Association of America set up. The organization's primary task was to issue documents for Issei who wished to bring in wives, parents, and other relatives to the United States. Additional certificates were provided for marriages, divorces, births, inheritances, and other statistically significant events. Furthermore, the Japanese Association served as protective agent when Japanese Americans' rights were attacked, and exhorted Issei and their children "to dress in the western fashion, to attend schools and excel academically, not to carouse in public, and, in general, to keep as low a social profile as possible."[84] The organization also served as cultural link between Japan and the United States, for which it was repeatedly accused of planning the takeover of America.

After Roosevelt had curbed the influx of male Japanese immigrants, the Californian legislature sought to cut Japanese economic growth by depriving them of the right to own land. In 1913, a bill was introduced in two versions: One version would bar all aliens from owning land, which had the drawback of stalling investment by foreign corporations. The second version forbade land ownership only by "aliens ineligible to citizenship." The phrase referred to the federal naturalization statute of 1870 (based on the 1790 statute), which restricted citizenship to "white persons and persons of African decent", deliberately omitting Chinese as the congressional debates show.[85] Although the Supreme Court established the precise meaning of "white persons" only in 1922-23, it was generally assumed that white persons excluded Orientals.[86] Japanese ambassador Sutemi Chinda immediately called upon President Woodrow Wilson, who assured the ambassador that he would use his influence to prevent any anti-Japanese legislation. However, California's governor, Hiram Johnson, remained unmoved by the President's request to reformulate the phrase that would bar Japanese. The popular governor pointed out that neither the Japanese nor any other race was mentioned; it was the racist nature of the federal naturalization statute that made it possible for California to discriminate between Asians and non-Asians in the matter of agricultural land ownership. When in 1913 the Alien Land Act was signed, forbidding ownership of agricultural land by aliens ineligible to citizenship, the United States set off one of several war scares in the press. In Japan the legislation it sparked mass protests and calls for retaliation, but the Japanese government chose to silently accept the law.[87]

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84 Ibid., pp. 128-133.
85 Daniels: *Politics of Prejudice*, pp. 46-64.
86 In *Takao Ozawa v. United States,* 260 U.S. 178 (1922) the Supreme Court ruled that Japan-born Ozawa was ineligible for citizenship under terms of the naturalization statute because "white" meant "Caucasian." In *United States v. Bhagat Sing Thind*, 261 U.S. 204 (1923) the Supreme Court decided that the high caste Punjabi Sing, settled in Oregon, could not be naturalized although anthropologists had defined a proportion of people in India as "Caucasians."
87 Robinson: *By Order of the President*, pp. 22-23; Daniels: *Asian America*, pp. 138-143.

Despite its psychological effects on the Japanese-American community, the law did not significantly inhibit Japanese control of agricultural land. There were two reasons for this. First, much of the land that Japanese tilled was leased rather than owned. Second, Japanese could transfer ownership simply to their native-born children, who were citizens of the United States under the Fourteenth Amendment of the Constitution. For those without children the law could be evaded by transferring to local representatives fifty-one percent of the stock and thus making it officially held by American citizens.[88]

Californians only slowly recognized the loopholes of the 1913 Alien Land Act. Seven years later, however, the anti-Japanese forces once more gained momentum. The initiative came from a broad anti-Japanese coalition including representatives of labor, farmers, and middle-class patriotic and fraternal organizations. Headed by Democrat and long-time Japanophobe James D. Phelan, this grass-roots movement felt betrayed by their government and set about drafting a tougher law, designed to plug loopholes in the 1913 law. The proposition was overwhelmingly popular in California. The state government was a proponent of the measure, as were both political parties. The proposition passed by a vote of almost exactly three to one. Its four major provisions were: 1) prohibition of any transfer of land to Japanese nationals; 2) barring of any leasing of land to Japanese nationals; 3) barring of acquisition, by lease or purchase, of land by any corporation in which Japanese held a majority of the stock; and 4) prohibition of non-citizens from acting as guardians for citizens in matters of land tenure. [89]

But the 1920 Alien Land Act, too, failed to inhibit seriously the growth of Japanese American agriculture. With large numbers of native-born Japanese Americans, in whose name land could be owned or leased, the law was more of a nuisance than an inhibition. Still the renewed agitation was disconcerting for the Japanese, many of whom pondered whether to stay in the country or to return to Japan. According to a 1925 poll taken in Seattle, almost two-thirds were indecisive as whether to return to Japan, and almost one-fourth said that they would return. Not one of 2,000 families interviewed was willing to say that they "definitely will not go back to Japan."[90]

Stirred by the new anti-Japanese movement in 1920, Tokyo initiated a new series of diplomatic conversations with the United States. Feeling that the agitation might eventually lead to the abrogation of the Gentlemen's Agreement and fearing loss of face, the Japanese government took another step to accommodate American prejudice. In February 1921 it announced that it would no longer issue passports to picture brides. The effect was immediately visible, with the excess of Japanese immigrants over emigrants going down from 8,000 per year from 1913 through 1919, down to 4,000

88 Daniels: *Asian America*, p. 143.
89 Daniels: *Politics of Prejudice,* pp. 79-91. Washington and Oregon soon followed suit, prohibiting Japanese land ownership in 1921 and 1923, respectively.
90 Shotaro Frank Miyamoto: *Social Solidarity Among the Japanese in Seattle*, Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1984, pp. 85-86. The starkness of the result surely owns to the fact that the poll was taken under the auspices of the Japanese Association.

per year after that.[91] The final step towards the exclusion of Japanese immigrants was taken by Congress: in 1924, lawmakers in Washington D.C. passed an Immigration Act to restrict immigration in general. This act modified the quota system introduced in 1921, limiting the number of immigrants allowed into the country in any one year to a set number. Japan was looking forward to receiving a quota like any other nation, but Californian Senator Hiram Johnson, aided by Senator Henry Cabot Lodge of Massachusetts, pushed for a special anti-Japanese provision to be inserted into the bill. This provision barred from entry as immigrants any person who was "ineligible to citizenship." Thus, although not named, Japanese were excluded.[92]

With the Immigration Act of 1924 Japanese immigration was cut off, apparently forever. The whole community shrank for a time as many Issei left for Japan. Yet the triumph of the exclusionists was only partial. Those Japanese who resided in the United States could continue to come and go. Congress never considered an amendment to making the status of "aliens ineligible to citizenship" hereditary, and by 1924 the predominantly female immigration of the years since the Gentlemen's Agreement had produced a self-sustaining demographic foundation for a "permanent" Japanese America.

91 Daniels: *Asian America*, p. 147.
92 Tichenor: *Dividing Lines*, pp. 143-149; Izumi Hirobe: *Japanese Pride, American Prejudice: Modifying the Exclusion Clause of the 1924 Immigration Act*, Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2001.

2 – From Pearl Harbor to Incarceration

This is our time to get things done that we have been trying to get done for a quarter of a century.

– The California Joint Immigration Committee[93]

The time has come
For my arrest
This rainy night.
I calm myself and listen
To the sound of shoes.

– Sojin Takei[94]

On Sunday December 7, 1941, planes of the Imperial Japanese Navy crippled the American naval fleet berthed at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii.[95] Ten weeks later, President Roosevelt signed Executive Order 9066, in which he transferred to the War Department the authority to exclude from designated areas along the West Coast "any or all persons" as a precautionary measure against espionage and sabotage.[96] Not in a single line did the order mention Japanese Americans. Yet the Army singled out the Japanese-American community, roughly two-thirds of them American citizens, and incarcerated them in makeshift Assembly Centers pending their removal to inland Relocation Camps.

To bridge the gap from the previous chapter I will first trace in brief the development of the Japanese-American community after the end of immigration in 1924. In the main part of this chapter I will discuss the events following Pearl Harbor, and close with the uprooting of the West Coast Japanese Americans and their deportation to Assembly Centers in spring 1942. I will focus in particular on Japanese Americans in the San Francisco Bay Area who were incarcerated at the Tanforan racetrack situated south of San Francisco, one of sixteen temporary Assembly Centers. This first stage of forced removal will be told from three perspectives: that of the authorities, that of the West Coast population, and that of the Nikkei community.

First, however, let us have a brief glance at the composition of the Japanese-American community at the eve of Pearl Harbor: After immigration from Japan had been completely halted in 1924, the first generation dwindled in numbers, while the American-born second generation grew up and soon outnumbered their parents (see Table 3). In a typical Issei family, children were born between 1918-1922. This meant that most Nisei were coming of age between 1939 and 1943. Whereas the native Nisei grew up distinctly American-oriented, the Issei community remained somewhat Japan-centered;

93 Cited in Jacobus TenBroek: *Justice, War, and the Constitution*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1968, p. 78.
94 Sojin Takei: *Arrest*, in Lawson Fusao Inada (ed.): *Only What We Could Carry. The Japanese American Internment Experience*, Berkeley: Heyday Books, 2000, p. 1.
95 See, for example, Edwin T. Layton et al.: *And I Was There: Pearl Harbor and Midway – Breaking the Secrets*, New York: Quill, 1985, pp. 54, 74-75.
96 *Executive Order No. 9066: Authorizing the Secretary of War to Prescribe Military Areas*, February 19, 1942, in U.S. Army, Western Defense Command and Fourth Army: *Civilian Exclusion and Restrictive Orders and Collateral Documents, 1942-1943*.

consequently, the Japanese-American community became increasingly divided as World War II approached.[97]

The Issei, drawn together by their common heritage and separated from white culture by racism, remained largely insulated against Americanization. This is not to say they remained untouched by American culture. For example, between 1900 and 1920, the inability to speak English on the part of adult Japanese immigrants dropped from 62 to 15 percent, and many Issei eagerly adopted the customs of the country.[98] At the same time, however, they remained affiliated with Japan by forming various ethnic organizations, such as the *kenjinkai*, prefectural associations, which became the focal point of Issei life; here they associated with fellow countrymen, celebrated their cultural heritage, and provided financial help to those in need.[99] The immigrant press, too, unified the Issei, and strengthened their ties to Japan. For many Issei, Japanese-language newspapers were the only access to world news, and like most immigrant newspapers, they tended to be pro-motherland.

Religion, on the contrary, was an aspect of Issei life that furthered adaptation into the American mainstream. At their arrival, most Issei were Buddhist but their institutional ties were not strong. Protestant Christian missionaries, in particular Methodists, worked eagerly to convert fellow Japanese Americans. In the San Francisco Bay Area these efforts had produced a predominantly Christian Japanese-American community by the mid-1930s.[100] One likely reason why Christianity expanded was that Christian churches made available important services, such as serving as employment agencies and teaching Issei English and American customs. Buddhism, which had no tradition in social welfare, lacked these services. Eventually, Buddhism became Americanized to compete more successfully with Christian missionaries. Despite some competition, the relation between Christian and Buddhist churches in the Bay Area – and at the Pacific Coast as a whole – was marked by peaceful coexistence.[101]

When it came to raise their children, Issei wanted to prepare them for life in either country because they feared that future discriminatory laws could prevent their children from succeeding in the United States. A further reason for passing on Japanese traditions lay in the Issei's the hope that their children would share in their parents' appreciation of the values and worldviews of the Meiji-era, in

97 Roger Daniels: *Concentration Camps: North America. Japanese in the United States and Canada during World War II*, Malabar: Krieger Publishing Company, [4]1993, p. 22.
98 John Modell (ed.): *The Kikuchi Diary: Chronicle from an American Concentration Camp: The Tanforan Journals of Charles Kikuchi*, Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1973, p. 7. For a comprehensive study on the transnational ideas, practices, and politics among the Japanese immigrants see Eiichiro Azuma: *Between Two Empires. Race, History and Transnationalism in Japanese America*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005.
99 Sucheng Chan: *Asian Americans: An Interpretive History*, Boston: Twayne, 1991, p. 68; Sandra C. Taylor: *Jewel of the Desert: Japanese American Internment at Topaz*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993, p. 8.
100 Taylor: *Jewel of the Desert*, p. 5. According to a sample of evacuees in all ten Relocation Camps in 1942, 50 percent claimed Buddhism (an enemy religion during World War II); 38 percent Christianity; 10 percent "no religion." Two percent did not answer the question. See Dorothy S. Thomas, Richard S. Nishimoto: *The Spoilage*, Berkeley: University of California Press, [2]1969, p. 3.
101 On the Issei in general see Roger Daniels: *Asian America: Chinese and Japanese in the United States since 1850*, Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1988, pp. 165-172; on the Bay Area see Taylor: *Jewel of the Desert*, pp. 5-8.

which the Issei took considerable pride.

A frequently quoted indicator for the Nisei's adherence to Japan – and arguably the most overrated one – was dual citizenship. Japan's laws on dual citizenship went no further than those of many European countries in claiming the allegiance of the children of its nationals born abroad. Also, since 1924 ethnic Japanese born in the United States had to be registered promptly with the Japanese consul to obtain dual citizenship. Few did so, and by the 1930s only twenty percent of the Nisei held dual citizenship.[102]

To pass on the cultural heritage, Issei sent their children to Japanese language schools, where the majority of Nisei spent almost eight years. Classes were usually an hour and a half every weekday after a full day of public school classes.[103] Language schools taught not only the Japanese language but also Japanese etiquette and moral values. Much of the allegedly Japanese virtues paralleled the Puritan work ethic: self-reliance, obligation, hard work, along with respect for parents and elders. In a few instances, schools tried to commit their pupils to political doctrines of imperial Japan, but such efforts commonly backfired, estranging the Americanized Nisei from their heritage. Moreover, Nisei naturally detested spending their afternoons in school while their Caucasian classmates roamed freely. Finally, because few of the Japanese language school teachers were trained teachers of language, the majority of Nisei failed to reach proficiency in Japanese – much to the disappointment of United States Army intelligence recruiters.[104]

Perhaps fifteen to twenty percent of the Nisei were Kibei, who had been sent to Japan to receive additional education.[105] While there exists the stereotype of the rabidly pro-fascist Kibei, they were, in fact, often inclined to socialist ideas (which made them no less suspicious to most Americans). As we shall see later, some Kibei utilized their deeper understanding of both cultures and languages to mediate between Issei and Nisei, playing a pivotal role during their incarceration. However, the fact that there was a significant Kibei group also indicates the pervasive ambiguity of Japanese America, an ambiguity, which opponents of the Japanese played on extensively.[106]

In spite of the Issei's efforts to convey to their children an appreciation of Japanese culture, the Nisei grew up as Americans by heart and mind. As teenagers they wore bobby socks, played baseball, jumped rope and dressed as other American teenagers did.[107] The most powerful Americanizing

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102 Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians (CWRIC): *Personal Justice Denied. Report of the Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians*, Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1982, pp. 38-39.
103 Stephen S. Fugita and Marilyn Fernandez: *Altered Lives, Enduring Community. Japanese Americans Remember Their World War II Incarceration*, Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2004, pp. 28-30.
104 Yuji Ichioka: *Before Internment. Essays in Prewar Japanese American History*, Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2006, pp. 75-91. Studies on Los Angeles and Seattle show that attendance was declining in prewar years. See Daniels: *Asian America*, pp. 175-176.
105 Of all American-born, 12.9 percent had received some schooling in Japan. Of those over 15 years of age approximately 20 percent had received some schooling in Japan. See Thomas: *The Spoilage*, p. 3.
106 Daniels: *Asian America*, pp. 176-177; CWRIC: *Personal Justice Denied*, p. 40.
107 Taylor: *Jewel of the Desert*, pp. 42-43.

influence came from schools: Those who lived in San Francisco's *Nihonmachi* attended school with other Nikkei, but most of the Bay Area's Nisei went to school together with Caucasian classmates. Despite the general anti-Orientalism of that time, schools were almost without exception fair to the Nisei children. They were truly integrated, due to their small numbers, and regularly associated with their Caucasian peers.[108]

Hence, Japanese American households typically represented a blend of Japanese and American elements. Yoshiko Uchida, a Nisei from Berkeley, remembered:

> Although our home was distinctly Japanese on mood, character and structure […] my parents were not strict traditionalists. […] The dominant language […] was Japanese. My parents spoke it to one another, to most of their friends and to my sister and me. But both understood us when my sister or I answered in English, and they had many non-Japanese friends with whom they conversed in English. […] Most of the stories my mother read to my sister and me were Japanese folktales or children's stories she had ordered from Japan. […] And at night, when Mama came to say our prayers with us, she always prayed in Japanese. […].
>
> There were also certain Japanese phrases that were an integral part of our daily lives. We never began a meal without first saying to my mother, "*Itadaki masu*" (a gracious acknowledgement to a hostess or whoever prepared the meal), and "*Gochiso sama*" (a sort of thanks for the fine food) when we had finished eating. […]
>
> Our daily meals […] were often a mixture of East and West. We always had rice instead of potatoes, however, and used soy sauce on our meat and fish rather than gravies and sauces.[109]

As the Nisei reached maturity, the conflict between them and their parents became more accentuated, for various reasons: First of all, as one of the founding fathers of immigrant history, Marcus Lee Hansen, pointed out, it is typical in immigrant families for the second generation to reject the values of the first generation, whereas the third generation finds more merit in those values.[110] Second, the generation gap in the Japanese-American community was particularly clear-cut because after 1924 no new immigrants arrived from Japan. Third, the Nisei's superior status as American citizens conflicted with the Japanese tradition that designated the Issei father as the uncontested head of family. On a related note, the demeanor of Nisei girls proved a constant source of friction. The Issei's paternalistic attitude about the role of women conflicted with the more progressive ideas prevalent in the United States. Finally, to emancipate themselves from their parents, Nisei founded their own organizations, most notably the Japanese American Citizen League (JACL) in 1930. Many Issei resented the JACL because it stressed Americanization and minimized cultural ties with Japan. According to Roger Daniels, a large number of Issei was even aware that their wish to perpetuate Japanese customs conflicted with the necessity to let them become one hundred percent American. Yet, few Issei found a real solution to this predicament.[111]

This generational conflict, which was in essence a cultural conflict, posed the lesser of two problems the Nisei faced as they reached maturity: Culturally Americans, typical products of a

108 Daniels: *Concentration Camps*, pp. 22-23.
109 Yoshiko Uchida: *Desert Exile. The Uprooting of a Japanese American Family*, Seattle and London: University of Washington Press, 1982, pp. 27-28.
110 Marcus Lee Hansen: "The Study of Man: The Third Generation in America," *Commentary* Vol. 14 (1952), pp. 492-500.
111 Daniels: *Asian America*, pp. 172-173.

pluralist society, endowed with U.S. citizenship and outstanding educational records, the Nisei had to realize that outside their ethnic community there was almost a total lack of economic opportunities. The ongoing Depression severely limited the jobs available, but most importantly, discrimination shut out the Nisei from the white-run economy.[112] The JACL was too young and poorly organized to improve the social and economic stature of the Nisei, so that they frequently remained trapped in their economic ghettos.[113]

All these problems were overshadowed by the attack on Pearl Harbor. For Japanese Americans, Pearl Harbor brought emotions too deep and complex to be easily sorted out.[114] Karl Yoneda, a Kibei from San Francisco, recalled: "December 7, 1941, was a warm Sunday with autumn-like sky. The morning *San Francisco Chronicle* banner read: 'F.D.R. Sends Note to Emperor of Japan; Crisis Near Breaking Point.'"[115] As the radio broadcasts the news from the attack, Yoneda was stunned:

> What a shock! Though we […] had discussed the possibility of a war between the U.S. and Japan, we never thought it would break out so soon […]. On the street, already the newsboy was shouting: "Extra, extra! Japan attacks Pearl Harbor!" In Japantown the only store open was the Goshado Book Store at Post and Buchanan streets. Inside the store, several Issei […] were proclaiming: "Hurrah for the Japanese Imperial Army." […]
>
> In front of the bookstore a reporter was interviewing two Nisei GIs. "Will you fight Japan?" asked the reporter. "Of course," the GIs replied. […]
>
> Across the street, Ichiro Kataoka, proprietor of the Aki Hotel, was coming down the stairway handcuffed to two FBI men.[116]

Across the Bay, where Japanese Americans were more dispersed, the news seemed unreal to many. A Nisei student from Berkeley felt disbelief first of all:

> We all agreed […] it could only be an aberrant act of some crazy irresponsible fool. It never for a moment occurred to any of us that this meant war. As a matter of fact, I was more concerned about my approaching finals at the university than I was with this bizarre news and went to the library to study. When I got there I found clusters of Nisei students anxiously discussing the shocking event. But we all agreed it was only a freak incident and turned our attention to our books. I stayed at the library until 5:00 P.M. giving no further thought to the attack on Pearl Harbor.[117]

The gamut of feelings among the Japanese Americans in the Bay Area and the West Coast as a whole encompassed contempt, anger, mistrust, wonderment, a sense of helplessness, and, above all, fear.

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112 Discrimination affected not just Japanese Americans but immigrants in general. There was a wider pattern of discrimination going back to the previous century. See, for example, Alexander Saxton: *The Rise and Fall of the White Republic: Class Politics and Mass Culture in Nineteenth-Century America*, London: Verso, 1996.

113 Charles Kikuchi: "Through the JERS Looking Glass. A Personal View from Within," in *Views from Within. The Japanese American Evacuation and Resettlement Study*, ed. Yuji Ichioka, Los Angeles: University of California, 1989, pp. 181-185; Azuma: *Between Two Empires*, pp. 111-134.

114 Page Smith maintains that the defeat of Pearl Harbor initially caused an euphoria among the West Coast Japanese. See Page Smith: *Democracy on Trial. The Japanese American Evacuation and Relocation in World War II*, New York: Simon & Schuster, 1995, pp. 90-91. He also claims falsely that at Pearl Harbor Japan virtually destroyed the U.S. Pacific Fleet, ignoring the fact that the much more important aircraft carriers remained undamaged, as were the base's vital oil tank farms, submarine pens, and machine shops. Using these resources, the United States was able to rebound and retaliate within only half a year.

115 Karl G. Yoneda: *Ganbatte. Sixty-year struggle of a Kibei Worker*, Los Angeles: Asian American Studies Center UCLA, 1983, p. 111.

116 Ibid., pp. 111-112.

117 Uchida: *Desert Exile*, p. 46.

Charles Kikuchi, a graduate student at UC Berkeley, noted in his diary that "everybody was saying that the Japs are going to get it in the ass," and feared that the United States might apply "Nazi measures" to the Japanese-American community.[118]

Contrary to these fears, in the days after Pearl Harbor the West Coast population remained calm. Open hostilities remained largely absent. The atmosphere was tense, but there was no mass hysteria. The *Los Angeles Times*, published in the city with the country's largest concentration of Japanese Americans, urged its readers to remain calm: "Let's Not Get Rattled," the paper warned in a December 10 editorial. It would take several Japanese aircraft carriers "together with a good-sized fleet of covering war vessels and fuel supply ships, to carry on a sustained campaign" against the West Coast.[119] Most newspapers echoed these calls for restraint. The *Sacramento Bee* favorably commented on a speech by Roosevelt, in which he warned not to discriminate against immigrants from enemy nations:

> Even those whose ancestors came from the Axis nations are, in the vast majority of cases, antifascist and anti-Nazi. They are eager to do their share in America's war effort. As for the other kind, the agents of the FBI will take care of them. The persecution mania – the race hatred theme – is a jarring note of discord in the American war symphony. It is […] the direct antithesis of liberty, justice, and decency.[120]

In addition, West Coast newspapers reprinted letters that Nikkei organizations had sent to local politicians and to Washington, D.C., and in which they pledged their loyalty to the United States and volunteered to contribute in any possible way to the war effort.[121]

In Washington, the outbreak of war in the Pacific had been expected.[122] Since mid-1940 the Justice Department had been compiling a list of potentially dangerous aliens, including more than 2,000 Japanese. On the very same day that war was declared, FBI agents picked up 736 Japanese aliens on the West Coast, and a smaller number of Germans and Italians. By mid-February, 1942, the FBI had 2,192 Japanese aliens under detention. All in all, about 8,000 Japanese aliens were interned in the United States and Hawaii during the war. On the West Coast about 10 percent of the adult male Japanese population was apprehended, including Japanese language teachers, Buddhist priests and priestesses, newspaper editors, members of the Japanese consulate, fishermen, travel agents, and martial arts instructors.[123] Some were known for their pro-Japanese attitudes, but most individuals

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118 Modell (ed.): *Kikuchi Diary*, p. 44.
119 *Los Angeles Times*, December 10, 1941. As cited by Peter Irons: *Justice at War*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1983, pp. 10-11.
120 *Sacramento Bee*, January 5, 1942.
121 Irons: *Justice at War*, pp. 6-7.
122 For diplomatic relations between Japan and the United States prior to the Pacific War see Hilary Conroy and Harry Wray (eds.): *Pearl Harbor Reexamined: Prologue to the Pacific War*, Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1990.
123 Government intelligence agencies had begun surveillance of the Japanese American community a decade earlier, after ultranationalists in Japan proclaimed the inevitability of war with the United States, see Irons, *Justice at War*, pp. 19-24. As I stated in the introduction, enemy aliens *interned* by the Justice Department – as opposed to those incarcerated under Executive Order 9066 – were entitled to individual hearings before a board. On the West Coast 2,192 Japanese aliens were interned, and about one-third of them were acquitted after such hearings. For an example of the proceedings vis-à-vis interned Japanese aliens see Louis Fiset: "In the Matter of Iwao Matsushita," in *Nikkei in the Pacific Northwest. Japanese Americans and Japanese Canadians in the Twentieth Century*, ed. Louis Fiset and Gail Nomura, Seattle: University of

were rounded up either because they were community leaders of some sort, or because their work made them likely fifth-column agents. They were arrested under a blanket presidential warrant, which did not specify any grounds for the arrests, and taken to internment camps run by the Immigration and Naturalization Service.[124] In San Francisco, the FBI also arrested five citizens, among them Yasuo Abiko, *Nichibei* English editor, George Hagiwara, third generation operator of the Japanese Tea Garden at Golden Gate Park, and Karl Yoneda, long-time labor activist. The FBI had mistaken them as spies from Mexico, and they were released shortly after the FBI realized its fault.[125] In addition to arresting aliens who were suspected of being dangerous, a little known fact is that more than two thousand Latin Americans of Japanese ancestry were also arrested and sent to the United States as a "barter reserve."[126]

Had the problem been left to the Justice Department, the internment of some Japanese aliens most likely would have remained the only step of the U.S. government pertaining the Japanese American population. But as Axis victories fuelled the fear of fascism, and as the virulent racism turned public opinion on the West Coast against the Japanese-American minority, the War Department came under pressure to take more radical measures. Lawyers, military commanders, and politicians argued for ten weeks whether national security required additional measures or not. The campaign illustrates, in the words of Peter Irons, "the dominance of politics over law in a setting of wartime concerns and divisions among beleaguered government officials."[127] In the end political views, not military views, prevailed. On February 19, 1942, Roosevelt signed Executive Order 9066, thus providing the legal basis for a policy of mass exclusion.[128]

Washington Press, 2005, pp. 215-235. Altogether an estimated 11,000 enemy aliens were interned in the United States, including Hawaii. This number can be broken down as follows: Japanese, perhaps 8,000; Germans, perhaps 2,300; and only a few hundred Italians. See Roger Daniels: "Words Do Matter. A Note on Inappropriate Terminology and the Incarceration of the Japanese Americans" in *Nikkei in the Pacific Northwest. Japanese Americans and Japanese Canadians in the Twentieth Century*, ed. Louis Fiset and Gail Nomura, Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2005, p. 193. For a survey of interned Japanese including Alaska, Hawaii, Latin America, and Marshall Islands, see Tetsuden Kashima: *Judgment Without Trial. Japanese American Imprisonment during World War II*, Seattle and London: University of Washington Press, 2003, p. 125.

124 There were seven Justice Department internment camps, in which Japanese aliens were imprisoned: Lordsburg and Santa Fe (New Mexico), Crystal City and Seagoville (Texas), Livingston (Louisiana), Fort Missoula (Montana), and Fort Lincoln (North Dakota).

125 Yoneda: *Ganbatte*, p. 114.

126 Michi Weglyn: *Years of Infamy: The Untold Story of America's Concentration Camps*, New York: Morrow Quill Paperbacks Inc., 1976, pp. 54-66; reprinted in Alice Yang Murray (ed.): *What did the Internment of Japanese Americans mean?*, Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2000, pp. 79-99. See also C. Harvey Gardiner: "The Latin American Japanese and World War II," in *Japanese Americans: From Relocation to Redress*, ed. Roger Daniels, Sandra C. Taylor, and Harry H. L. Kitano, Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1991, pp. 142-145; Seiichi Higashide: *Adios to Tears: The memoirs of a Japanese Peruvian Internee in U.S. Concentration Camps*, Seattle: University of Washington Press, [2]2000; Thomas Connell: *America's Japanese Hostages: The World War II Plan for a Japanese Free Latin America*, Westport, Conn.: Praeger, 2002.

127 Irons: *Justice at War*, p. 42.

128 There is a plethora of scholarly writing on the decision to evacuate the Japanese Americans on the West Coast. For a comprehensive account including reprints of key primary sources see Roger Daniels: *The Decision to Relocate the Japanese Americans*, Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1975. John R. Herzig; "Japanese Americans and MAGIC," *Amerasia* Vol. 11 (1984), pp. 47-65, evaluates the role of MAGIC (secret Japanese diplomatic messages) in the decision-making process. For an astute analysis focusing on legal aspects see Peter Irons: *Justice at War*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1983. Greg Robinson: *By Order of the President: FDR and the Internment of Japanese Americans*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2001, argues that Roosevelt was indifferent to the fate of the Nikkei, and explains why. A dissenting view

Executive Order 9066 allowed the Secretary of War and his military commanders "to prescribe military areas […] from which any or all persons may be excluded."[129] Furthermore, the order authorized the Secretary of War "to provide for residents of any such area who are excluded therefrom, such transportation, food, shelter, and other accommodations as may be necessary."[130] Lastly, the order stripped the Justice Department of jurisdiction over the evacuation program and delegated authority to the War Department:

> The designation of military areas […] shall supersede designations of prohibited and restricted areas by the Attorney General […], and shall supersede the responsibility and authority of the Attorney General […] in respect of such prohibited and restricted areas.[131]

Executive Order 9066 is remarkable for two reasons. First, its inconspicuous, general wording makes it sound more like a relief measure than a document that was to be used to sanction mass incarceration. Second, the order provided the Army with immense powers over the civilian population without declaring martial law. Executive Order 9066 was a carte blanche, no more and no less. Technically, it authorized the Army to relocate and confine any person anywhere in the United States without due process of law, to suspend the writ of *habeas corpus* of every single citizens in the United States. "Be as reasonable as you can," the President told his War Department staff.[132]

Despite its general nature, every person involved in the decision making process was aware that Executive Order 9066 was aimed at Japanese Americans on the West Coast. However, some military commanders contemplated applying Executive Order 9066 to German and Italian enemy aliens – no one even thought of doing anything to *citizens* of German or Italian descent. When Roosevelt learned that East Coast commanders considered creating military areas along the East Coast to exclude German and Italian nationals, he immediately made clear to Secretary of War Henry L. Stimson that

> no action is [to be] taken under [Executive Order 9066] in relation to [German and Italian] enemy aliens without your talking to me first. […] The control of alien enemies seems to me to be primarily a civilian matter except of course in the case of the Japanese mass evacuation on the Pacific Coast.[133]

Stimson immediately asked his Assistant Secretary of War for a status report, whereupon John J.

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from the master narrative is presented by Page Smith: *Democracy on Trial. The Japanese American Evacuation and Relocation in World War II*, New York: Simon & Schuster, 1995. Smith argues that evacuation and incarceration were tragic but cannot fault the government. Finally, outside the scholarly discourse but nevertheless influential (see introduction), Michelle Malkin: *In Defense of Internment. The Case for "Racial Profiling" in World War II and the War on Terror,* Washington, D.C.: Regnery Publishing Inc., 2004.

129 *Executive Order No. 9066: Authorizing the Secretary of War to Prescribe Military Areas*, February 19, 1942, in U.S. Army, Western Defense Command and Fourth Army: *Civilian Exclusion and Restrictive Orders and Collateral Documents, 1942-1943*.

130 Ibid.

131 Ibid.

132 As cited by Stetson Conn: "Japanese Evacuation from the West Coast," in *The United Sates in World War II: The Western Hemisphere: Guarding the United States and Its Outposts*, eds. Stetson Conn et al, Washington, D.C.: Center of Military History, U.S. Army, 1964, pp. 131-132.

133 *Memorandum, President Roosevelt to Secretary of War Stimson*, May 5, 1942, in Roger Daniels (ed.): *American Concentration Camps: A Documentary History of the Relocation and Incarceration of Japanese Americans, 1942-1945,* New York: Garland, 1989, Vol. 5.

McCloy assured him that there would be no collective action against German and Italian aliens, neither on the East Coast nor on the West Coast. McCloy estimated that altogether less than 6,000 Germans and Italians needed to be evacuated, a task to be accomplished by the Justice Department.[134] When General John L. DeWitt, chief of the Western Defense Command (WDC), continued to ponder collective actions against German and Italian aliens, Stimson sent him a letter explicitly stating that "[f]or the present there is to be no collective evacuation of German and Italian enemy aliens in the Western Defense Command," and urging DeWitt "to proceed with caution and discretion." To be on the safe side, Stimson required the overzealous Western Defense Commander to give weekly reports of the numbers of individuals excluded under the Executive Order.[135] Thus, DeWitt's earlier promise to follow the Japanese evacuation with those of the estimated 114,000 Italian and 97,000 German aliens in the western states never materialized.[136]

By the time the die was cast in Washington, the situation on the West Coast had fundamentally changed. As mentioned earlier, the first reaction was one of tolerance and understanding. As late as February 6, the *San Francisco Chronicle* titled "Alien Hysteria Mostly Imaginary" and contended that

> the lack of popular hysteria […] is in interesting contrast with the situation in the last war, when the witch-hunting seemed to emanate from the people themselves – though it did reach, finally, some departments of the Government, which were among the worst offenders.[137]

Yet this editorial proved to be a foreboding omen for a title-wave shift in attitude towards the Japanese Americans. Wartime hysteria started to heat up as Secretary of Navy Frank Fox and WDC officials spread false reports, which blamed Japanese American saboteurs for the defeat at Pearl Harbor, ignoring the fact that there was no single documented act of sabotage, and that Japanese Americans in large numbers had immediately come to aid in the defense of the island.[138] That Knox and other Navy officials spoke of "treachery" in Hawaii against better knowledge had at least two reasons. First, Knox did not want the people to lose faith in their Navy, and second, he knew that Japanese Americans were the perfect scapegoats. To argue that the humiliating defeat had been possible only due to fifth columnists was a convenient lie to divert attention from the embarrassing truth and raise public morale.[139] West Coast newspapers eagerly picked up this version of events. On February 21, for example, the *San Francisco Chronicle* wrote:

> [Let us recall] the details of the Pearl Harbor affair [which] have been reluctantly accepted as facts. We know that thousands of Japanese in Hawaii were ready and went into action with

134 *Memorandum, Assistant Secretary of War McCloy to Secretary of War Stimson,* May 14, 1942, in Daniels (ed.): *American Concentration Camps*, Vol. 5.
135 *Memorandum, Secretary of War Stimson to General DeWitt,* May 22, 1942, in ibid., Vol. 5.
136 For the internment of German enemy aliens see Jörg Nagler: "Internment of German Enemy Aliens in the United States during the First and Second World Wars," in *Alien Justice: Wartime Internment in Australia and North America*, ed. Kay Saunders and Roger Daniels, St. Lucia, Queensland: University of Queensland Press, 2000, pp. 66-79. For the treatment of Italian enemy aliens see Stephen R. Fox: *The Unknown Internment: An Oral History of the Relocation of Italian Americans During World War II*, Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1990.
137 *San Francisco Chronicle*, February 6, 1942.
138 Franklin Odo: *No Sword to Bury: Japanese Americans in Hawai'i during World War II*, Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2004.
139 Daniels: *Concentration Camps*, pp. 35-36.

> clockwork precision the instant the attack was started. Swarms of wheezing jalopies, ancient light trucks, poured from cane fields and truck gardens into the roads. Traffic was choked. [Our men], on leave in the outskirts, had to fight their way […] through a tangle of blocked traffic, broken down cars, flat tires, while the bombs were crashing on their ships and stations.[140]

In truth, Japanese-American college students were quickly issued arms and sent to engage Japanese paratroopers who had allegedly landed on the island.[141] By mid-February unfounded reports of immediate invasion and sensational rumors of underground armies ready to lay West Coast cities in ruin gained momentum and drowned the cool-headed voices.[142]

Equally important for fuelling hostility toward the Japanese-American community was the sustained success of Japanese forces in the Far East. By Christmas the Japanese had captured Wake Island and occupied Hong Kong. They had struck the Malay Peninsula, Midway Islands, and attacked the Philippines, destroying substantial numbers of American aircraft. On December 27, General Douglas McArthur had to evacuate Manila and, after being isolated for almost three months, surrendered unconditionally, arguably the worst American defeat since the Civil War. On February 27 the battle of the Java Sea resulted in another American naval defeat with the loss of thirteen Allied ships. By February the military position of the United States was bleak indeed, and reports of battlefield deaths added a painful personal dimension to the war news.[143]

It must be stressed, however, that the nearest Japanese airplane to the West Coast were those attacking Wake Island, more than 5000 miles West of San Francisco. Surface Vessels and troops were even farther away. Technically, hit-and-run air raids along the West Coast were possible. In fact, several Japanese submarines probed the West Coast.[144] However, a large-scale invasion was beyond the capacity of the Japanese military. This is not the hindsight of historians; these were the findings of the high command of the U.S. Army at that time.[145]

As indicated above, the West Coast press had been working steadily to resurrect the image of the Pacific Coast Japanese as advance agents of the dreaded "yellow peril," and image that in particular the Hearst syndicate had been fostered for decades by a steady flow of supplements on the so-called Oriental menace.[146] After Pearl Harbor, virtually the entire West Coast press joined in and

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140 *San Francisco Chronicle*, February 21, 1942. It is worth noting that the article speaks of the Pearl Harbor "affair."
141 Franklin Odo: *No Sword to Bury: Japanese Americans in Hawai`i during World War II*, Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2004, pp. 104-106.
142 CWRIC: *Personal Justice Denied*, pp. 51-60.
143 Ibid., pp. 47-48.
144 Twice the West Coast was shelled: On February 23, 1942, a Japanese submarine fired shells at a refinery in Southern California and damaged one oil well. On June 22, 1942, another submarine bombarded Fort Stevens, Oregon.
145 General Mark W. Clark of the GHQ admitted that the West Coast defenses were not adequate to prevent the enemy from attacking, but at the same time he agreed with the Navy that the chance of an invasion was, as he put it, "nil." The conclusion of the GHQ report on the advisability of mass evacuation is quoted in Daniels: *Concentration Camps*, pp. 66-67. The first who exposed the myth of military necessity was U.S. Army's Chief Military Historian, Stetson Conn: "The Decision to Relocate the Japanese from the Pacific Coast," in *Command Decisions,* ed. Kent R. Greenfield, New York: Harcourt, 1959. For a revised version see Stetson Conn: "Japanese Evacuation from the West Coast," in *The United States in World War II: The Western Hemisphere: Guarding the United States and Its Outposts*, eds. Stetson Conn et al, Washington, D.C.: Center of Military History, U.S. Army, 1964.
146 On the "yellow peril," see Daniels: *Concentration Camps*, p. 30. In addition to anti-Japanese fiction in the yellow press, there were several influential books, written by navy officials, scholars and diplomats, that discussed the probability

cynically exploited war news, printing indiscriminately rumors and military fantasies about Japanese invasion of the West Coast. Listed below are some representative editorial headlines from the *Los Angeles Times*:

> WHAT TO DO IN CASE OF POISON GAS ATTACKS[147]
>
> OLSEN SAYS WAR MAY HIT STATE – Shift of Combat to California Possible, Governor Declares.[148]
>
> THE QUESTION OF JAPANESE-AMERICANS: Perhaps the most difficult and delicate question that confronts our powers that be is the handling – the safe and proper treatment – of our American-born Japanese, our Japanese American citizens by the accident of birth. But who are Japanese nevertheless. A viper is nonetheless a viper wherever the egg is hatched.[149]
>
> LINCOLN WOULD INTERN JAPS. [Mayor] Bowron Says Civil War President Would Move Aliens If In Office Today.[150]

When on February 19, 1942, Roosevelt issued Executive Order 9066 reactions were overwhelmingly favorable. The *San Francisco Chronicle* commented in the prospect to exile all persons of Japanese ancestry:

> FACTS FORCE AMERICA TO STOP PUSSYFOOTING – The President's order [9066] means the removal of Japanese from coastal and other military contacts.
>
> The order specifies that persons removed by the Army as unwanted, may be excluded regardless of whether they be aliens or citizens. Attorney General Biddle makes it clear that the immediate effect will be upon the Japanese. […]
>
> It is a principle that persons of Japanese blood who are loyal to the United States and its ideals can show that loyalty by recognizing necessity. This is a fight for survival. In this fight we cannot pussyfoot.[151]

The *Palo Alto Times*, usually resistant to anti-Japanese agitation, cheered the looming mass exodus, calling it "one of the most important details in this war's strategy, losing nothing in heroic quality by its purely preventative character."[152] The *Los Angeles Examiner*, part of the Hearst syndicate, stated: "We are fortunate that the men chosen for the job [i.e. General Clark who privately opposed the evacuation, and General DeWitt] rightly interpreted the American spirit of tolerance and humanity and observed it with justice and impartiality."[153]

Among those stirring up fifth column worries were Edward R. Murrow, rising liberal star of the airwaves, and Walter Lippmann, America's chief pundit. Lippmann, usually a detached observer,

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and possible outcome of a war with Japan, most notable Walter Pitkin's *Must we Fight Japan?* (1878), Admiral Alfred Thayer Mahan's *The Influence of Sea Power on History* (1890), and *In the Interest of America in Sea Power, Past and Present* (1897), Homer Lea's *The Day of the Saxon* (1912), and Hector C. Bywater's *Sea Power in the Pacific* (1921). See Greg Robinson: *By Order of the President: FDR and the Internment of Japanese Americans*, Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 2001, pp. 11-29.

147 *Los Angeles Times*, December 19, 1941.

148 *Los Angeles Times*, January 26, 1942.

149 *Los Angeles Times*, February 2, 1942.

150 *Los Angeles Times*, February 13, 1942.

151 *San Francisco Chronicle*, February 21, 1942. It is worth noting that whereas the *Chronicle* was aware of the consequences of Executive Order 9066, the *New York Times* printed the text of the order under the headline: "Text of Roosevelt's Alien Order." In fact, due to the euphemistic language the government used to describe its actions, few people outside the Western Defense Command realized the extend of the evacuation program. See Roger Daniels: "Incarceration, Redress, Reconsiderations: Reviewing the Story of the Japanese-Americans," *The Immigration and Ethnic History Newsletter* Vol. 37 (2005), p. 1.

152 *Palo Alto Times*, April 13, 1942, in Daniels (ed.): *American Concentration Camps*, Vol. 6.

153 *Los Angeles Examiner*, April 11, 1942, in Daniels (ed.): *American Concentration Camps*, Vol. 6.

merely echoed unfounded warnings. In his essay titled "The Fifth Column on the Coast" he wrote on February 12:

> The enemy alien problem on the Pacific Coast, or much more accurately, the fifth column problem, is very serious and it is very special. […] The peculiar danger of the Pacific Coast is in a Japanese raid accompanied by enemy action inside American territory. […] It is the fact that the Japanese navy has been reconnoitering the Pacific Coast more or less continually and for a considerable period of time, testing and feeling out the American defenses. It is the fact that communication takes place between the enemy at sea and enemy agents on land. These are facts which we shall ignore or minimize at our peril. It is the fact that since the outbreak of the Japanese war there has been no important sabotage on the Pacific Coast. From what we know about Hawaii and about the fifth column in Europe, this is not, as some have liked to think, a sign that there is nothing to be feared. It is a sign that the blow is well organized and that it is held back until it can be struck with maximum effect. […] The Pacific Coast is officially a combat zone; some part of it may at any moment be a battlefield. Nobody's constitutional rights include the right to reside and do business on a battlefield. And nobody ought to be on a battlefield, who has no good reason for being there.[154]

Lippmann's column was carried in most newspapers and quoted by numerous government officials. However, anti-Japanese agitation was not limited to the press. Representing the traditional voices of anti-Japanese agitation, interest groups such as the California Joint Immigration Committee (a private organization despite its name), the Native Sons and Daughters of the Golden West and the California Department of the American Legion lobbied local politicians. They were joined by economic competitors of the Nikkei who saw the war as an opportunity to "kick the Japs out".[155] As in the previous decades, it was the educated middle class that expressed its racist views most eloquently: When rumor spread that Japanese would be evacuated to El Dorado County (east of Sacramento) without proper guard, the Placerville Shakespeare Club felt compelled to express its views on Japanese Americans in a resolution to General DeWitt:

> El Dorado County has always been free of this oriental menace [and] neither business, industry nor farmers have ever found it necessary to employ this class of labor or to cater in any way to these foes of our country. We will accept them [if they are put in a guarded camp] but we will not tolerate them here of their own free will, to come and go as they please or to seek employment on our industries and on our farms […]. The Placerville Shakespeare Club […] does hereby vigorously protest to the federal government […] the humiliation to our citizens of harboring these undesirables, the members of whose race are the enemies of our country, the betrayers of our trust who inflicted devastation and death upon our innocent people in Pearl Harbor […]; a race who are the murderers of our men and boys […] and the potential saboteurs of our spiritual and democratic way of life […].[156]

It is worth noting that there is a good chance that not a single of these men had ever met a Japanese American, let alone talked to one.[157] In general, people lacking contacts with the Nikkei community harbored the bitterest feelings, while people who dealt with them on a personal and regular basis – church groups, university faculty, and people employing Japanese Americans – were far less

154 *New York Times*, February 12, 1942. This and other newspaper extracts are compiled at http://www.cr.nps.gov/nR/twhp/wwwlps/lessons/89manzanar/89facts1.htm (consulted 02/01/2007).
155 CWRIC: *Personal Justice Denied*, pp. 67-69.
156 The Placerville Shakespeare Club: *A Resolution to the United States Relocation Service and General DeWitt,* May 4, 1942, in Daniels (ed.): *American Concentration Camps,* Vol. 5.
157 According to the 1940 census, only a single person of Japanese ancestry (a Nisei) lived in all of El Dorado County. See WCCA: *Bulletin No. 8*, May 2, 1942, p. 6.

concerned about alleged dangers emanating from them, or their supposed reluctance to assimilate. In short, ignorance was an integral ingredient of prejudice and hysteria, and much of the resentment stemmed from the long fostered anti-Orientalism outlined in chapter 1. Pearl Harbor merely was the trigger to reactivate virulent fears of a "yellow peril."

While the decision to evacuate all persons of Japanese lineage was overwhelmingly popular there were sympathizers who remained unimpressed by the hysteria.[158] John Steinbeck was one of them, asserting forthrightly the fierce loyalty of Japanese Americans to the United States.[159] Particularly church groups supported the Nikkei by assisting them in their preparations for evacuation. A typical representative of this group was Eleanor Breed who worked as secretary at the First Congregational Church of Berkeley. Like many who sought to relieve the situation for the Japanese Americans she risked public scorn. One day she received a phone call:

> "Is this the Congregational Church? Well, will you answer one question for me? Why do we have to be so nice to the Japs, feed them lunch, give them tea and hospitality? They aren't treating our boys that way." I drew a long breath and rose to the challenge, hinting that of course we with our higher (we think) standards wouldn't want to imitate what Japan was doing anyway, reminded her that someone once said "Love your enemy," went on to describe the hectic week […], told of various good and gentle Japanese who were as sensitive and humiliated by this experience as *we* would be, etc. "I know," the voice went on. "There are good ones and bad ones, I guess. I get all mixed up."[160]

The Provost of the University of California, Dr. Monroe Deutsch, who actively promoted a policy that would allow many Nisei students to leave camps to continue their education at universities outside the West Coast, fully supported the church's actions toward the Japanese Americans:

> Allow me to express my own appreciation for the attitude […] your church has taken with reference to the Japanese and the American Japanese who are being evacuated. Your action has been one that is proper [and proves that] the ideals which we profess we try to put in practice. If any criticize you for it, my only though would be that they are not truly Americans or Christians.
>
> People who fail to recall that these people who are being evacuated have no charges against them individually; they are not guilty of misconduct. They are being removed because of fear, which is gripping the hearts of some people. Personally, I feel that our country will someday feel ashamed of its conduct in this entire matter.[161]

Surely, such voices represented a tiny minority. And even if there had been more people keeping a cool head, it was highly unlikely that they could deter the top military brass in the Western Defense Command from making the West Coast a "Jap-free" zone.

Devising the evacuation were Lieutenant General John L. DeWitt, heading the Western Defense Command and Fourth Army, and his Chief of the Aliens Division, Major (later Colonel) Karl R.

158 Daniels: *Concentration Camps*, 78-79.
159 Cliff Lewis: "John Steineck's Alternative to Internment Camps: A Policy for the President, December 15, 1941," *Journal of the West* Vol. 34 (1995), pp. 55-61.
160 *War Comes to the Church Door: Diary of a Church Secretary in Berkeley, California, April 20 to May 1, 1942*, housed in the UC Berkeley Bancroft Library JERS collection. Reprinted in Lawson Fusao Inada (ed.): *Only What We Could Carry. The Japanese American Internment Experience*, Berkeley: Heyday Books, 2000, p. 39.
161 Ibid., pp. 44-45. For Dr. Deutsch's views see also his Memorandum that was forwarded to Roosevelt on May 27, 1942, in Daniels (ed.): *American Concentration Camps*, Vol. 5.

Bendetsen. After Roosevelt had signed Executive Order 9066, they set forth a policy that singled out for evacuation all citizens of Japanese ancestry and their alien parents. The following paragraphs delineate the development of this policy.

On March 2, 1942, taking the first open step towards mass evacuation, General DeWitt issued Public Proclamation No. 1. The proclamation designated two Military Areas comprising a broad coastal strip that included the western halves of Washington, Oregon, California, as well as a southern proportion of Arizona. Additionally, it listed ninety-eight prohibited zones surrounding military and civilian installations that were vital to the war industry. A press release accompanying Public Proclamation No. 1 predicted the eventual exclusion of all persons of Japanese ancestry from Military Area No 1, where 107,704 Japanese Americans lived, comprising 85 percent of all Japanese Americans in the continental United States (see Table 4). Two weeks later, on March 16, Public Proclamation No. 2 added four more military areas, along with 933 additional restricted zones.[162]

Few Japanese took the hint in Public Proclamation No. 1 and moved out from Military Area No. 1, for several reasons: Many hoped that calls for evacuation would subside. Moreover, the freezing of their bank accounts left most without the financial resources that resettlement would require. Few of them had friends outside the West Coast willing to help in finding jobs and housing, and, finally, newspaper reported a growing hostility in the interior areas toward Japanese Americans.[163]

By the middle of March, the Western Defense Command realized that voluntary evacuation was unworkable. Since there were no criminal sanctions for noncompliance with military orders, unless martial law was declared, the next step was to draft an enforcement statute and which Congress had to sign. Colonel Bendetsen himself drafted the bill, which he knew was to be an essential tool to enforce evacuation. The bill, known as Public Law 503, was signed into law on March 21 without any real debate in Congress. Public Law 503 made violations of subsequent military orders subject of criminal prosecution.[164]

In the meanwhile, on March 11, DeWitt set up the Wartime Civil Control Administration (WCCA), a branch of the Western Defense Command, to handle the forced mass exodus.[165] As director he appointed the freshly promoted Colonel Karl R. Bendetsen. Bendetsen, who accurately claimed that he "conceived method, formulated details and directed evacuation of 120,000 persons of Japanese ancestry from military areas," became the architect of mass evacuation.[166] However, the WCCA needed assistance from civilian agencies; it was estimated that it would take about 35,000 military

162 Daniels: *Concentration Camps*, pp. 83-85.
163 U.S. Army, Western Defense Command and Fourth Army: *Final Report: Japanese Evacuation from the West Coast, 1942*, Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1943, pp. 101-101.
164 Irons: *Justice at War*, pp. 66-68.
165 U.S. Army: *Final Report*, p. 41.
166 *Who's Who in America*, 1944-1945. Later, when the tide of informed opinion about the evacuation shifted, Karl Bendetsen insisted that he was just obeying orders. For a well-researched double biography juxtaposing the lives of Bendetsen and one of his victims, see Klancy Clarc de Nevers: *The Colonel and the Pacifist: Karl Bendetsen, Perry Saito, and the Incarceration of Japanese Americans during World War II*, Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 2004.

personnel – nearly three combat divisions – to administer and guard all Japanese Americans.[167] To solve the problem, Roosevelt on March 18, 1942, signed Executive Order No. 9102, establishing the War Relocation Authority (WRA), a civilian agency authorized to aid and supervise people emigrating from the coast by order of the Army.[168] Milton S. Eisenhower, brother of the Army general Dwight D. Eisenhower, assumed the position as WRA director.[169]

The WRA was jointly responsible with the WCCA for the evacuation program: The WCCA rounded up all persons of Japanese ancestry in western Washington, western Oregon, all of California, and the southern part of Arizona, and concentrated them in Assembly Centers. There they were housed and fed until the WRA finished building inland Relocation Camps for permanent resettlement. With the transfer of the evacuees from Assembly Centers to Relocation Camps – after an average stay of three months – the Army handed responsibility to the WRA.[170]

Endowed with the authority of Executive Order 9066 and Public Law 503, Bendetsen moved quickly to implement the Army's part of the evacuation. On March 16, he instructed two site-selection teams to locate facilities capable of housing 100,000 people. Within four days these teams reported back to the Colonel, listing seventeen potential sites. After quick review, DeWitt ordered the Army's Engineer Corps on March 20 to proceed with the construction of fifteen "Assembly Centers" for the housing of evacuees, and gave the Corps a deadline of April 21 for making the camps ready.[171] Furthermore, to administer the actual evacuation and to aid the evacuees in their preparations, on March 17 the WCCA opened forty-eight "Service Centers" on the West Coast.[172]

On March 24, Bendetsen, over the signature of his boss, issued Public Proclamation No. 3 (effective on March 27), that affected the daily lives of Japanese Americans by establishing an 8 p.m. to 6 a.m. curfew for all aliens and Japanese American citizens. This curfew order additionally restricted the movements of Japanese Americans to a five-mile radius from their homes and places of work.[173] On the same say, DeWitt issued the first of 108 "Civilian Exclusion Orders" forcing the 55 Japanese American families living on Bainbridge Island, near Seattle, to leave their homes within six days. They were moved to the nearby Assembly Center at the Puyallup Fairgrounds.[174]

Voluntary migration ended for good on March 27, when Public Proclamation No. 4 forbade

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167 Daniels: *Concentration Camps*, p. 83.
168 *Executive Order No. 9102: Establishing the War Relocation Authority in the Executive Office of the President and Defining its Functions and Duties*, March 18, 1942, in U.S. Army, Western Defense Command and Fourth Army: *Civilian Exclusion and Restrictive Orders and Collateral Documents*, *1942-1943*.
169 Eisenhower clearly preferred voluntary migration, envisioning some sort of loosely supervised "Reception Centers." To discuss his plans, on April 7, he met with governors, attorneys general, and other officials from ten Western States in Salt Lake City. There, his plans went up in smoke as a barrage of racism greeted his appeal for tolerance and assistance. In the end he had to yield to public pressure and implemented the Army's plans for mass incarceration. For quotations from Eisenhower's report on the meeting in Salt Lake City see Irons: *Justice at War*, pp. 71-72.
170 *Memorandum of Agreement between the War Department and War Relocation Authority*, April 17, 1942, JERS: 18:504-507; see also U.S. Army: *Final Report*, pp. 50-52.
171 U.S. Army: *Final Report*, pp. 44-48.
172 Ibid., p. 43.
173 *Public Proclamation No. 3*, in U.S. Army: *Civilian Exclusion and Restrictive Orders.*
174 *Civilian Exclusion Order No. 1*, in U.S. Army: *Civilian Exclusion and Restrictive Orders.*

those Japanese Americans within Military Area No. 1 and the Californian part of Military Area No. 2 – some 90 percent of those who resided on the West Coast (see Table 4) – from leaving the area without permission. Thus they remained trapped in their homes and could do nothing but wait for the Exclusion Order that would inform them of the date of their deportation. Until August 7, 1942, the WCCA uprooted 110,442 persons of Japanese ancestry. Of these, 18,026 were moved directly to Reception Centers.[175] 92,193 people were evacuated to Assembly Centers, where they remained for an average of about 100 days (see Table 5).[176] Some 70 percent were citizens of the United States.[177] Though the first stage of evacuation was everything but a humanitarian feat, as Army records claim, it was not completely erratic: The WCCA evacuated first areas close to military installations; furthermore, to lessen the discomforts of forced evacuation and incarceration, the Army did not split families and moved them, wherever possible, to Assembly Centers close to their homes.

The first Bay Area Nikkei to be evacuated were those living in the dock areas and waterfront of San Francisco.[178] Exclusion Order No. 5, posted on April 1, informed them that they would have to leave by April 7. These 660 Nikkei were shipped to the Santa Anita Assembly Center, the first to be finished. The remainder of the San Francisco community, and most of the Japanese Americans from the Bay Area north of San Jose, were moved between April 28 and May 20. They were assigned to Tanforan, a racetrack located in San Bruno, just south of San Francisco (see Table 7).[179]

The evacuation procedure was the same all the way down the West Coast: As soon as an Exclusion Order was posted, all Japanese Americans in the respective area had to report to a nearby Civil Control Station. In San Francisco, where over 5,000 Japanese Americans resided, three Control Stations were set up, one of them in the local JACL office on Bush Street. Two more Control Stations were established in Oakland, one in San Mateo, one in Hayward, and one in San Jose. In Berkeley, the First Congregational Church extended its service to Uncle Sam (see Table 6). Upon reporting, each family was assigned a number and informed what to bring for departure: bedding and linen, toilet

175 Shortly after Roosevelt signed Executive Order 9066 the War Department hoped that the Japanese Americans in Military Area No. 1 would leave voluntarily. Therefore, the Army deemed it sufficient to set up two "Reception Centers" outside Military Area No. 1, each with a capacity of 10,000 persons, to incarcerate those Nikkei who were unwilling or unable to evacuate voluntarily. When in mid-March forced evacuation became the official policy the Army transferred responsibility for the two Reception Centers to the WRA, and the WRA used them henceforth as Relocation Camps. Thus practically Reception Centers were Relocation Camps, which opened early enough to receive evacuees directly from their homes, that is, without being first transferred to an Assembly Center. There were two Reception Centers: Manzanar in California, and Poston in Arizona (see Appendix 1).

176 Karl R. Bendetsen: *An Obligation Discharged. The Army Transfers to War Relocation Authority, a Civilian Organisation, Japanese Evacuated from the West Coast. An Address delivered to the Personnel of WCCA,* November 3, 1942, in U.S. Army: *Civilian Exclusion and Restrictive Orders*; Wartime Civil Control Administration: *Bulletin. 1942-1943*, San Francisco: Western Defense Command and Fourth Army, 1943, p. 53.

177 Dillon S. Myer: *Uprooted Americans: The Japanese Americans and the War Relocation Authority during World War II,* Tuscon: University of Arizona Press, 1971, p. 30.

178 Already before the first Exclusion Orders were issued Issei had to move out of restricted zones, such as the Richmond-El Cerrito area due to its proximity to the Standard Oil refinery in Richmond. Likewise, the town of Alameda, located on an island with airports at each end, near a shipyard, had to be evacuated in February already. The affected Nikkei had to move three times: First out of the restricted area, then to an Assembly Center, and finally from Assembly Center to Relocation Camp.

179 Taylor: *Jewel of the Desert*, p. 61.

articles, extra clothing, kitchen utensils, and essential personal objects, but "only what they could carry."[180] No pets were permitted. Washing machines, cars, furniture and other heavy items could be stored by the Federal Reserve Bank "at the sole risk of the owner."[181]

Many Japanese Americans were surprised when their Exclusion Order instructed everyone to leave, regardless of citizenship.[182] Even after evacuation was clearly a matter of time many hesitated to dispose of their property. One reason was that there were no particular guidelines about disposing of their household possessions and real property.[183] Not until end of March the Federal Reserve Bank opened offices in some West Coast cities to protect Japanese Americans against fraud, forced sales, and unscrupulous creditors. However, the bank had no legal enforcement power to assure fair liquidation. Furthermore, its goal to arrange for the speediest possible liquidation contradicted its goal to minimize losses. Officially, the FRB had no mandate to property storage. Some offices assisted in arranging private storage, however, without taking responsibility for the items thus stored. Likewise, the Army eventually offered some warehouse space but refused to give any guarantees. The fears of the Nikkei that property would not be secure proved right: an estimated eighty percent of the property stored was looted, while local authorities looked the other way.[184]

Moreover, feeling that politicians in Washington had sold them off to the Army, evacuees were skeptical of the federal government's assistance, limited as it was. Numerous families panicked and sold at giveaway prices the possessions and land for which they had worked so hard. By early April the streets of San Francisco's *Nihonmachi* were bare of people except "lines of moving vans […] operated by junk dealers." A reporter interviewed a young Nisei:

> Q: Why are they selling this to junk dealers, and not giving it over to the FRB [Federal Reserve Bank] custodian?
> A: Mainly because they don't secure the property. They might as well have the money as leave it someplace where it might not be safe.
> Q: How much are they selling this stuff for? (There was a washing machine, small grand piano, three bed springs [sic], three inner spring mattresses, a dresser, a cupboard, some wicker furniture, and other small odds and ends)
> A: $100 for all of it.
> Q: Did they have it appraised or take the first junk dealer's offer?
> A: They take whatever they are offered.[185]

Returning ten days later he observed that most stores had "For Lease" signs on them, and notices reading like this: "Thank you for your kind patronage. When times are better we shall be back and can

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180 *Civilian Exclusion Order No. 20* (or any other), in U.S. Army: *Civilian Exclusion and Restrictive Orders*.
181 Ibid.
182 Mine Okubo: *Citizen 13660*, New York: Columbia University Press, [3]1983, p. 17.
183 As early as February, the Justice Department, the Department of War and West Coast officials pressured the President for the appointment of a separate custodian for Japanese-American property. However, the Treasury Department, which had willingly taken over large businesses of German enemy aliens, repeatedly ducked responsibility for Japanese-American property, which meant taking care of hundreds of small businesses and farms. Besides, as the Treasury Department correctly pointed out, there was no law allowing the government to control property of American citizens. Roosevelt himself made clear to his cabinet that he was not concerned what happened to Japanese property. See Robinson: *By Order of the President*, pp. 136-145.
184 CWRIC: *Personal Justice Denied*, pp. 117-133; Thomas: *The Spoilage*, pp. 15-17.
185 *Notes on Aliens. A Visit to Japanese-town*, B.V.A Abbot, April 7, 1942, JERS: 13:365-366.

meet you, our friends, again."[186]

The success of liquidation also varied depending on the business: The fishing fleet was speedily sold at low prices out of fear the government might confiscate the ships (as happened in Los Angeles). Dry cleaners and dyers, in contrast, had little to lose and most regained their business after the war. Nikkei in the art goods business suffered heavily as time pressure failed to bring appropriate prices, and because most warehouses were vandalized. Likewise, the losses of the nursery owners in the Richmond-El Cerrito area were substantial because the Issei had to leave in February already, and the Nisei lacked the experience and knowledge to manage the business. The evacuation order reached them just before mother's day, which accounted for one-fifth of the annual flower sale.[187] In general, evacuation hit hardest those Nikkei who owned or leased land, families whose head had been arrested by the FBI, and those who lacked contacts to Caucasian communities (i.e. farming communities and residents of ethnic ghettos). On the East Bay, where Japanese were dispersed and regularly had developed ties to non-Japanese neighbors, many could rely on Caucasian friends volunteering to provide for safe storage.[188] A study conducted shortly after the war estimated that each adult evacuee had a median property loss of $1,000 and an income loss of $2,500 (in 2005 dollars this equals about $26,000 and $65,000 respectively[189]). This adds up to approximately $77 million, of which the government paid $37 million. The claims filed under the Japanese-American Evacuation Claims Act totaled $148 million.[190]

Nothing of this bleak reality can be found in the Army's mendacious *Final Report*. Indulging in self-praise, the WCCA perspective displays the stark contrast between the experience of the Japanese Americans and the fallacious perspective of a bureaucratic apparatus: DeWitt credited his staff for "unselfish devotion and duty," but many agents were reportedly ill trained and in some cases hostile to evacuees.[191] Also, the report claimed that "[u]ltimately satisfactory arrangements were made for over 99 per cent of all [agricultural] property,"[192] ignoring the fact that Service Centers existed only in the urban areas and largely failed to reach the rural farm population. Regarding other property, the Army report completely shied numbers, contending that, "evacuee response to the property protection services was most gratifying, and clearly indicated their effectiveness."[193]

Another poorly managed part of evacuation was the examination of all evacuees for contagious diseases, which was to be conducted in the course of registration by the Civil Control Stations. In a confidential report the supervisor for the San Francisco Bay Area criticized that the quality of

186 Ibid., JERS: 13:368.
187 CWRIC: *Personal Justice Denied*, p. 125.
188 Taylor: *Jewel of the Desert*, pp. 50-57; Uchida: *Desert Exile*, pp. 60-67.
189 Using the unskilled wage rate. For calculations using different series, such as the CPI or GDP per capita, see http://www.measuringworth.com/calculators/compare/ (consulted 02/01/2007).
190 CWRIC: *Personal Justice Denied*, pp. 118-121.
191 U.S. Army: *Final Report*, p. ix.
192 Ibid., p. 54.
193 Ibid., p. 54.

examination varied considerably, that sometimes there were no inspections at all, and that very often the County Health Officer had little instruction and did not know that he had to fill out forms. "The whole procedure was farcical and wasteful," the unpublished report concluded.[194]

Adding to the evacuees' strain was the vagueness and indefiniteness of their situation; for many Japanese Americans this was the worst condition to deal with. The Army kept upcoming Exclusion Orders secret to the last minute, and did not always tell the Nikkei where they would be brought to. Thus, the evacuation order was often received with some relief. Yet each order created new uncertainties and rumors:

> Most of the Japanese at the Center to whom I talked seemed entirely resigned to the necessity of moving, and […] to the manner in which the actual moving was to be done. Their chief worries came from the scarcity of information about where and when they were going and what was to be done to them once they reached the Reception Center. They were not quite convinced that the Reception Center won't be some form of concentration camp, dressed up, but nonetheless a concentration camp.[195]

This report from the San Francisco Control Station at Van Ness Ave, characterizes the typical reaction of Japanese Americans. As the quote indicates, despite all the worries the overwhelming majority of Japanese Americans chose to comply docilely, obeying almost without complaint the regulations that were destroying their lives. The National Secretary of the JACL, Mike Masaoka, and most of the Nisei leadership, argued that by opposing they would merely add to the disloyal stereotype that already existed. By cooperating they hoped to mitigate the present circumstances and be in a position to negotiate better treatment later. Various individuals criticized the JACL for its practical view but, as Roger Daniels pointed out, "it is easier to criticize this accommodationist policy than to construct viable alternatives for a responsible leadership to adopt."[196] What caused most friction was not the JACL's subordination, but the fact that it actively collaborated with the FBI, providing names of alleged spies. These patriotic activities never uncovered any real sabotage or espionage. Nor did collaboration provide the protection the JACL hoped for, because race, not loyalty, was the criterion for evacuation.[197] But such actions caused hard feelings within the Japanese-American community, feelings that came out in Assembly Centers and Relocation Camps where the Japanese-American community had ample time to ponder its situation.

Yet a small number of dissenters defied the JACL's call for meek compliance. One was Lincoln Kanai, secretary of the Japanese branch of the YMCA in San Francisco, who violated the travel restrictions to visit his family in Wisconsin. After he learned that the Army was searching for him he returned to San Francisco to face his trial. In his official statement he explained that for him staying true to constitutional principles was more important than obeying "a numbered few" who he

194 *Letter*, Phillip Schafer (San Francisco Area Supervisor) to Phoeby Bannister (Public Assistance Representative), May 5, 1942, JERS: 13:314-315.
195 *Report from B.V.A Abbot to J.W. Abbot on the Service Control Center at 1701 Van Ness Ave*, April 2, 1942, JERS: 13:364-365.
196 Daniels: *Concentration Camps*, p. 80.
197 Irons: *Justice at War*, pp. 78-80.

deemed fallible:

> I, Lincoln Kanai, make this confession willingly and without duress: – That our democratic aims as based on our constitution […] must be preserved, and that whenever discriminatory measures without equality for opportunity for civil responsibilities because of race, creed or color, and without due process of law for all citizens alike are made by a numbered few, that I shall oppose such action, if expedient by willful violation when it is detrimental to our country's welfare and injurious to our basic democratic ideals. […]
>
> I am a native American citizen, [and] my pride, loyalty and honor is basic in my being an American.[198]

All in all, the police arrested ten Japanese Americans in the Bay Area who had failed to respond to their Exclusion Order. Most of them pleaded guilty to violations of Public Law 503 and were sentenced to short prison terms. Only one, Fred Toyosaburo Korematsu, a resident of Oakland, volunteered as candidate for a test case. He was one of four Nisei whose challenge to the evacuation eventually reached the Supreme Court. Originally, he had no intention to challenge DeWitt's orders – his motivation for failing to report for evacuation were personal: He had undergone a facial operation and planned to escape with his Italian-American girlfriend to Arizona, where he hoped to marry and settle down. The police picked him up on May 30 in San Leandro. After conferring with his friends and family in the Tanforan Assembly Center, he decided to fight the case.[199] In all four test cases the Supreme Court later approved of the constitutionality the evacuation.[200]

The majority of Japanese Americans, however, resigned to what seemed to be their fate and reported to their Control Station. The scenes that repeated themselves all-around the Bay Area were similar regardless of the city: In Berkeley, readers of the local *Gazette* learned on April 21 that a Civil Control Station was being set up in the First Congregational Church on Channing Way. The actual Exclusion Order was posted not before Friday, April 24, stating:

> A responsible member of each family, and each individual living alone, living in the above described area will report between the hours of 8:00 A.M. and 5:00 P.M., Saturday, April 5, 1942, or during the same hours on Sunday, April 26, 1942, to the Civil Control Station located at 2345 Channing Way, Berkeley, California.[201]

Close to 1,200 Nikkei lived in the described area that included Berkeley, El Cerrito, and the western portion of Contra Costa County. The order made clear that everybody would have to leave "by 12:00 o'clock noon on Friday, May 1" or become subject of criminal persecution. Thus they had a bit more than one week to prepare for their evacuation.

Mine Okubo, an art student at the University of California, reported on Sunday, April 26, to register for her younger brother and herself. Her mother had died and her father had been arrested by the FBI, which made her the head of a family of two. When she arrived at the Control Station she was surprised finding soldiers standing guard at the entrance and around the building, their bayonets mounted. For the first time she and her fellow evacuees realized that they were considered dangerous.

198 *Pacific Cable*, August 26, 1942, JERS: 18:367.
199 Irons: *Justice at War*, pp. 93-103.
200 Ibid., pp. 104-252.
201 *Civilian Exclusion Order No. 19*, in U.S. Army: *Civilian Exclusion and Restrictive Orders.*

The soldiers who supervised the almost 1,200 Nikkei leaving from Berkeley were merely a token contribution of the Army, but they were a graphic reminder that evacuation was not voluntary, and a foretaste of an everyday feature of their future confinement. For the time being, however, there was no need to apply force. In fact, "the soldiers and their lieutenant were very considerate, […] treating [the evacuees] like human beings,"[202] as a church secretary, distributing sandwiches and lemonade, noticed. There was even some fraternization when one night a group of Nisei students invited three soldiers, who came from as far as North Dakota and Arkansas, to have dinner together in downtown Berkeley.[203]

Each Control Station was staffed with representatives of various civilian agencies,[204] which registered the evacuees, assisted them in their preparations for evacuation. Okubo noted in her diary:

> The woman in charge asked me many questions and filled in several printed forms as I answered. As a result of the interview, my family name was reduced to No. 13660. I was given several tags bearing the family number, and was then dismissed. At another desk I made the necessary arrangements to have my household property stored by the government.[205]

Apart from the civilian staff and the soldiers there were quite a number of Caucasians appearing at the Control Station. Some inquired whether Sunday service would be cancelled. Others asked if there were any take dogs or cats they could adopt. One elderly lady came to learn what was going to happen to her Japanese gardener.[206]

Within the next two days the Control Stations posted lists with names, stating day and time of evacuation. This left the families three to five days to get ready. The day of departure was a day that remained seared into the minds of all evacuees. Soldiers guarded the block around the Control Station while Greyhound buses were lined alongside the curb. The first group leaving Berkeley on Tuesday, April 28, represented the diversity of a community whose only common denominator was their ethnicity. The church secretary observed:

> Among the first group was a pair of newlyweds, arm in arm, the bride with a collegiate bandana around her head and a flower in her pompadour, and a big American flag in brilliants on her lapel. There were two babies in baskets, a three-week-old little girl, and a six-months-old boy [sic]. And everyone, young, middling, and old, wore a tag around his neck or hanging from his lapel, with name printed on and a number […]. One pert little college girl in slacks had her name tag around her neck tied to a chain from which dangled her Phi Beta Kappa key. The evacuees went aboard [the bus], waving merrily and cracking jokes with their friends who were to follow in the next few days. But as the bus pulled out, Ann Saito was crying.[207]

Others faced the tragedy with sarcasm: "Today is the day that we are going to get kicked out of Berkeley. It is certainly degrading," Charles Kikuchi noted in his diary. Despite his frustration, he witnessed how Caucasian volunteers tried to make his degrading experience as bearable as possible:

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202 Inada (ed.): *Only What We Could Carry*, p. 40.
203 Ibid., p. 43.
204 These agencies were the U.S. Employment Service, the U.S. Public Health Service, the Farm Security Administration, the Federal Reserve Bank, and the Bureau of Public Assistance of the Social Security Board. See U.S. Army: *Final Report*, pp. 522-525.
205 Okubo: *Citizen 13660*, p. 19.
206 Inada (ed.): *Only What We Could Carry*, p. 40.
207 Ibid., p. 43.

"The church people are handing out free food. I guess this is a major catastrophe so I guess we deserve some free concessions. The church people around here seem so nice and full of consideration, saying, "Can we store your things?" "Do you need clothes?" "Sank you." [sic]"[208] All in all, the uprooting of the Bay Area Nikkei happened without major incidents although a visiting minister from Montana remarked that he knew some areas where a church helping out orientals would be "burned to the ground."[209]

As the Tanforan racetrack was situated just twenty miles south of San Francisco, the transfer was a relatively short one for the Bay Area residents. Yet it marked the crossing into another world, from freedom to captivity. A few weeks later, an sixteen-year-old girl recorded from behind barbed wire her impressions of that momentous passage:

> The special Greyhound speeded rapidly on the highway towards its destination. The time was about ten o'clock in the morning, and there was a little drizzle […]. This bus drip was different from the usual one. The passengers were alien and American-born Japanese and a soldier, who was an amiable person with a ready smile. With khaki uniform and steady gun he looked very much like a hero. [The little children] crowed around him at first timidly, and slowly and the boldest little boy touched the gun.[210]

208 Modell (ed.): *Kikuchi Diary*, pp. 51-53.
209 Inada: *Only What We Could Carry*, p. 46.
210 *Impressions of an Evacuee*, JERS: 17:340-341.

3 – Arrival and Adjustment

Physically, all Assembly Centers were more ideally suited for troops than they were for the housing of families.

– U.S. Army: Final Report[211]

There are two things in this camp that people want more than anything else – good food and toilet paper. With these two essentials in stock I think that Toni and I are ready to join the ranks of the aristocrats of Tanforan. Thank you very much.

– Tamotsu Shibutani[212]

The first group of evacuees arrived on April 28, a volunteer contingent of 421 workers to handle the primary needs of transforming the Tanforan racetrack into an Assembly Center. In the following days, numerous buses unloaded their human cargo from the Bay Area. Three days later over 3,000 Japanese Americans had arrived, and by May 10 Tanforan housed 7,496 people (see Table 7). By May 20, with the arrival of the last group of evacuees, the population had risen to 7,796 and remained at that level for almost four months.[213]

As the Greyhound buses approached the compound, the evacuees first noticed the grandstand, the dominating feature of the former racetrack, capable of seating 10,000 people. Then, a high barbed wire fence, pierced at regular intervals by tall guard towers, came into view. A throng of inmates, jammed along the fence, was watching as the newcomers arrived. Scattered over the compound, which measured 118 acres (0.5 km^2), were rows of barracks in near-perfect symmetry. Everywhere construction was going on.[214] The baleful contrast of grandstand and barbed wire fence prefigured the many paradoxes and incongruities that the evacuees were about to endure.

The incoming buses stopped in a separated area where the military police were housed and the administrative buildings were located. As the evacuees got off the bus, they had to walk between a cordon of armed guards to enter the compound proper. William Kochiyama recalled how he became overwhelmed with bitterness and rage at the sight of troops with rifles and fixed bayonets and "screamed every obscenity I knew at the armed guards daring them to shoot me."[215] While soldiers inspected the baggage for contraband – any weapons, straight-edged razors and liquor – the Nikkei were directed to an area beneath the grandstand. There a cursory medical check was made. The

211 U.S. Army, Western Defense Command and Fourth Army: *Final Report: Japanese Evacuation from the West Coast, 1942*, Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1943, p. 184. On page 93 it says "Assembly Centers had to be constructed pending the transfer of the evacuees to the Relocation Centers. Assembly Centers were not internment or concentration camps. They were temporary shelters where evacuees could be assembled and protected."
212 *Letter*, Tom Shibutani to Dr. Thomas, May 18, 1942, JERS: 18:254. Tamotsu Shibutani later became a distinguished sociologist.
213 *Tanforan Totalizer*, Issue 2, May 23, 1942, p. 1.
214 Yoshiko Uchida: *Desert Exile. The Uprooting of a Japanese American Family*, Seattle and London: University of Washington Press, 1982, pp. 67-69; *Population and Composition*, JERS: 16:327.
215 Testimony, William Kochiyama, November 23, 1981. As cited in Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians (CWRIC): *Personal Justice Denied. Report of the Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians*, Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1982, p. 136.

evacuees entered a slightly partitioned compartment and were asked to undress. A nurse looked into their mouths and checked if the evacuees had been vaccinated for smallpox.[216] After filling out a series of forms each family was assigned its living quarter.[217] Bachelors were sent to the second floor of the grandstand, which served as a dormitory for over 500 people. Because housing was scarce smaller families had to share one quarter. As the following quote from Mine Okubo's diary demonstrates, in some instances the inmates could influence housing arrangements if they persisted vigorously enough:

> The girl who took the slips said, "Sorry, but we will have to send you and your brother to separate bachelor quarters. We are short on rooms for small family units." I told her that my brother and I had come as a family unit of two and that we intended to remain that way. I had to argue the point with each of the girls at the desk in turn, but finally they decided to let us remain as a family unit.[218]

Thereafter each evacuee family received an address, such as "barrack 40, apartment 12," and was dismissed. Searching for their quarters, the first arrivals found out that their "barrack" was in fact a stable, and their "apartment" a horse stall, "a euphemism so ludicrous it was comical," as Yoshiko Uchida recalls.[219] Altogether twenty-six converted horse stables housed about 3,700 people, roughly one half of all evacuees. Most stables consisted of fifty stalls, twenty-five facing north, and twenty-five facing south. Three to six people occupied a stall which had formerly accommodated one horse. Each stall was about ten by twenty feet (three by six meters) and empty except for a number of army cots. Most stalls had linoleum floors that had been laid over manure-covered boards.[220] The smell of horses hung in the air, and the whitened corpses of insects still clung to the hastily white-washed walls. Huge spikes and nails stuck out everywhere, while dust, dirt and wood shavings covered the floor.[221]

Each stall was divided into two sections by a swinging half-door. The front section, used to store the fodder, had two small windows on either side of the door. The rear section, dubbed "the dungeon" by some evacuees, was windowless. A single electric bulb dangled from the ceiling. The walls to the adjoining stalls stopped a foot short of the sloped roof, presumably to provide for better ventilation for the horses. This arrangement deprived the occupants of all but visual privacy.[222] Sleep was not easily won. Okubo noted that

> because the partitions were low and there were many holes in the boards they were made of, the crackling of the straw and the noises from the other stalls were incessant. Loud snores, the grinding of teeth, the wail of babies, the murmur of conversations – all this could be heard the full length of the stable.[223]

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216 Mine Okubo: *Citizen 13660*, New York: Columbia University Press, [3]1983, p. 31.
217 Uchida: *Desert Exile*, p. 69.
218 Okubo: *Citizen 13660*, p. 32.
219 Uchida: *Desert Exile*, p. 70.
220 *The First Month at Tanforan. A Preliminary Report*, Tamotsu Shibutani, Haruo Najima, Tomiko Shibutani, p. 4, JERS: 16:395; Sandra C. Taylor: *Jewel of the Desert: Japanese American Internment at Topaz*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993, p. 65.
221 Uchida: *Desert Exile*, p. 70.
222 Ibid., p. 70.
223 Okubo: *Citizen 13660*, p. 47.

It was, as a fellow inmate put it, "communal living, with semi-private cubicles provided only for sleeping."[224] The camp's weekly newspaper, the *Tanforan Totalizer*, struck a humorous tone – as always when reporting on the downsides of incarceration:

> We are especially interested in the control of our omnipresent nocturnal teeth-grinders, whose dental virtuosity makes our nights hideous with sounds that run the gamut of mimicry from apple-crunching to a bullfrog in full cry.[225]

Apart from cots the only things the Army issued were one straw tick and one blanket per person. People over sixty years of age received cotton mattresses, and some horse stall residents received them, too, as compensation for their inferior living quarters.[226] Most people spent the first nights shivering as one blanket was not enough to keep them warm. One could apply for additional blankets, but it took several days to get one.[227] Some evacuees wrote to the Red Cross to complain about the unhealthy conditions, yet without result.[228] Summing up her first impressions, a Nisei noted in her diary:

> The whole atmosphere around the stables is rather dejecting because everyone has to sit in front of their homes since there is not enough room inside – seems almost like slums. F(rances) was very disgusted – it made me feel pretty bad too. However, I think parts of this area aren't so bad.[229]

Those who arrived during the second half of May were assigned to barracks which were still under construction when the first evacuees arrived. By the end of May, some 140 barracks housed about 4,000 people. Barracks were uniform in size and appearance, each measuring twenty by one hundred feet (six by thirty meters) and comprised either five apartments each for six persons, or ten apartments for three persons each. All barracks had plywood partitions, about 8 feet high, leaving an open space between each partitioned room so that even subdued conversation disturbed neighboring compartments.[230] As they were built of green wood, which shrank as it dried, grass grew between the boards and the wind swept through unhindered. To keep the living quarters dust-free thus was a task worthy of Sisyphus.[231] The advantages of barracks over stables were a controversial topic: although the barracks didn't smell like the stables, they were badly insulated, so that on sunny days they became unbearably hot, and chilly during the nights.[232] Tom Shibutani, a graduate student from the University of California who later became a distinguished sociologist, wrote to Dr. Thomas about his immediate reaction to the degrading conditions:

> We are more than ever anxious to get out of this dump – and we are not alone. Naj[ima] probably got tossed in with some fellows he doesn't even know and he probably wants to get

224 Uchida: *Desert Exile*, p. 75.
225 *Tanforan Totalizer*, Issue 8, July 4, 1942, p. 7.
226 *First Month,* Shibutani, Najima, Shibutani, p. 4, JERS: 16:395.
227 *Letter*, Tom Shibutani to Virginia Galbraith, May 4, 1942, JERS: 18:247.
228 John Modell (ed.): *The Kikuchi Diary: Chronicle from an American Concentration Camp: The Tanforan Journals of Charles Kikuchi*, Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1973, p. 195.
229 *Diary*, Doris Hayashi, p. 1, May 4, 1942, JERS: 17:089.
230 *Population and Composition*, JERS: 16:328.
231 Modell (ed.): *Kikuchi Diary*, p. 195.
232 *Letter*, Fred Hoshiyama to M., May 17, 1942, JERS: 18:212.

> out right away. Tomi is moaning too. So am I. We'll cover this mess as best as we can, but we want to get out pronto. Sorry to moan so much. I am not ungrateful; just disgusted and want to be an escapist.[233]

The least fortunate were the bachelors who had to move into the grandstand, which served as a makeshift dormitory during the first month. The hall, where the pari-mutuel clerks once sold their $2 tickets, housed approximately 500 men, most of them unmarried Issei.[234] Charles Kikuchi, who participated in the JERS project, visited the dormitory from time to time to observe how the different groups of evacuees coped with their incarceration:

> In one corner a sullen Kibei has built himself a little cube so that he can work on his master's thesis. [There are] homemade barber shops [and] clothlines [sic] all around. Issei cluster around a radio discussing final Japanese victory. A brave Nisei occasionally opens his mouth and he is shouted down. But three American flags continue to hang upon the walls. Other single men sprawl out in their beds, smoking or playing Japanese cards. A few sleep with their mouths wide open, snoring like mad, which adds to the general confusion. Over in the far corner there is a lone but seedy looking minister with a dirty collar, who sits so straight in his bed reading a Buddhist prayer book. Flies buzz around him, but he pays no attention. This room is about the most colorful place in the camp, but I am afraid that those Issei look to Tokyo rather than to Washington, D.C., for salvation.[235]

As this quote illustrates, the arrivals immediately went about modifying their environment, and in accord with this chapter's heading, I will now shift the focus from arrival to adjustment.

The existence of evacuees in Tanforan voicing pro-Japanese sentiments was no secret; references to disgruntled Issei can be found throughout the evacuees' records. Tentatively estimated, perhaps five percent of the total population were openly pro-Japanese.[236] They consisted predominantly of unmarried male Issei, most of whom had passed their 50th birthday.[237] About 100 applied for repatriation.[238] But what did being "pro-Japan" actually mean for these elderly men? When they hailed their motherland most of them had in their mind an idealized image of rural Japan of the late Meiji era, the place of their childhood and youth. Little did they know about the means and motivations of the junta which held imperial Japan in its grip. If they had known, they probably would have been less enthusiastic about Japan's role in the war. But after decades of reading the pro-Japanese immigrant press most Issei were reluctant to reconsider their romantic notions and remained

233 *Letter*, Tom Shibutani to Dr. Thomas, May 26, 1942, JERS: 18:258.
234 *First Month*, Shibutani, Najima, Shibutani, pp. 74-75, JERS: 16:430-431; Okubo: *Citizen 13660*, p. 63.
235 Modell (ed.): *Kikuchi Diary*, p. 65.
236 Numbers are difficult to ascertain: About 2,000 evacuees, 25 percent of the population, were Issei. They comprised some 300 Issei bachelors, plus some 800 Issei couples. In addition, there were 850 to 1,150 Kibei, if we accept the usual rate of 15 to 20 percent Kibei among the Nisei. My tentative estimate would be that half of the Issei bachelors and maybe a quarter of the Kibei were decidedly pro-Japanese minded, which would amount to 400 persons, or 5 percent of the total population. I failed to discover any clues – including rumors – about an active *pro-fascist* faction. If they existed, they had no influence whatsoever in Tanforan. See *Population and Composition*, JERS: 16:327; *First Month*, Shibutani, Najima, Shibutani, pp. 54-66, JERS: 16:420-426.
237 *Diary*, Doris Hayashi, p. 177, July 21, 1942, JERS: 17:178. There is no data on age in individual Assembly Centers in the Army's *Final Report*. There is no reason, however, to believe that the population at Tanforan was substantially different in its demographic makeup from the mainland Japanese-American population. There, half of the Issei were 50 years of age or older, and 17 percent had passed their sixtieth birthday. Since male Issei were usually between 10 and 20 years older than their wives, almost all of them must have been at least 50 years of age. One feature that set Tanforan apart from other Camps was its decidedly urban population. See Thomas Dorothy S. Thomas, Richard S. Nishimoto: *The Spoilage*, Berkeley: University of California Press, ²1969, p. 4.
238 *Diary*, Doris Hayashi, p. 183, July 23, 1942, JERS: 17:181; ibid., p. 186, July 24, 1942, JERS: 17:182.

convinced of Japanese propaganda slogans. One common belief, for instance, was that "Japan was fighting for the equality of races."[239]

In short, we must bear in mind that, by and large, the pro-Japanese voices in Tanforan identified with Japan's language, customs, and history, and not with the fascists who took over Japan after they had left for the United States. Furthermore, harboring pro-Japanese sentiments did not mean that these Issei went about rioting. Instead, they were content to shout "baka-tare" (fool) when passing by the U.S. flag, or to ruminate on possible outcomes of the war, or to rail against their wardens and the United States in general, which, considering the life-long hostility and discrimination they had endured, let alone their current situation, is not surprising.[240] All this made them a nuisance in the eyes of the pro-American majority of evacuees but hardly a danger to the peace in Tanforan.[241]

Besides, the majority of Issei, the three-quarters who were married and had children, had different priorities. Their overarching concern was the welfare of their children. Naturally, they wanted what was best for their offspring and they asked themselves whether a country that put its citizens behind barbed wire – without trial, only for their ancestry – would ever acknowledge the Nisei as full-fledged citizens, recognize their abilities, and allow them to prosper. Many Issei also doubted that Japan was a better country for their children who had grown up as Americans in heart and mind. This inner conflict found expression in the Issei's highly ambiguous attitude towards their children: On one hand, the first generation "glowed over with the wonders of Japan" and liked to point out to their children, with a sense of superiority: "If America is so wonderful and democratic, if the Caucasians are our true friends, then why are you in the concentration camp even if you are Americans?"[242] On the other hand, many Issei "had tears in their eyes at the flag-raising ceremony when their sons and daughters saluted to the American flag,"[243] and Charles Kikuchi reported that most Issei parents felt "so sorry for the Nisei because we are in a tough situation."[244] Another Issei stated that his daughter was American while he was Japanese "with a smile and no trace of any bitter feelings."[245] In the end, most Issei seemed to resolve that their children had to choose for themselves.

Interestingly enough, a JERS study stated that the Issei adjusted better than the Nisei, and even that "quite often Issei were more American than Nisei."[246] The primary reason why the Issei adjusted better – more precisely, why they were less frustrated with the incarceration than the Nisei – was the fact that it was easier for the Issei to make sense of their incarceration: Even though they were

239 Modell (ed.): *Kikuchi Diary*, p. 197.
240 Ibid, p. 54.
241 Roger Daniels described the pro-Japanese Issei arrested by the Justice Department as "rather elderly and inoffensive gentlemen and not a threat to anything." Roger Daniels: *Concentration Camps: North America. Japanese in the United States and Canada during World War II*, Malabar: Krieger Publishing Company, [4]1993, p. 35. The records pertaining to Tanforan support this assessment.
242 *First Month*, Shibutani, Najima, Shibutani, p. 49, JERS: 16:418.
243 Ibid., p. 50, JERS: 16:418.
244 Modell (ed.): *Kikuchi Diary*, p. 106.
245 Ibid., p. 106.
246 *First Month*, Shibutani, Najima, Shibutani, p. 50, JERS: 16:418.

prisoners without trial, they knew that due to their status as enemy aliens the government had the legal power to intern them. This cannot be said for the Nisei. Forced into idleness they grew painfully aware of the injustice of their incarceration. As 19-year-old Ben Iijima observed:

> We couldn't help but feel we were suffering unjustly. It wasn't the food, the sleeping quarters, the physical inconveniences (these discomforts were normal in a nation at war), rather the mental conflict of having been distrusted by our friends to whom we had been loyal, and by loyalty we didn't mean overt acts of flag waving, but a silent faith and conviction that his was our country, our way of life, our beginnings and ends.[247]

Adding to the Nisei's distress were reports from outside. On June 19 Charles Kikuchi noted in his diary: "Yesterday another statement was made against the 'Japs' in the U.S. Day by day these native fascists are getting louder and louder."[248] When General DeWitt declared on June 29 that he had reopened the restricted areas to German and Italian enemy aliens, Kikuchi, a citizen of the United States, was "disgusted as hell."[249] Doris Hayashi, after reading an article on Tanforan in the *San Francisco Chronicle,* was disconcerted: "It seems that some people think we're having a summer vacation in a resort."[250] And when Ben Iijima learned about the renewed efforts of nativist groups to deprive the Nisei of their citizenship, anger and disappointment took hold of him:

> [Opening the *Chronicle*] I saw staring at me right in the face [an article] which said in so many pretty disgusting words that Webb, a Native Son of the Golden West, was trying to deprive all Americans of Japanese ancestry of their citizenship. The proposal submitted by Webb, who […] desires to be an attorney general of our beloved state, is to make an amendment to the constitution making it plain and simple that we are persons without a country […]. Now, I realize that the proposal itself is not adequate to be effective, and that an amendment of that sort cannot easily [be pushed through]. But the very idea of denying us of our citizenship is disgusting. […] The editorial enclosed in a small box was most repulsive, too. It was kind enough to say that we should deplore such a proposal […] because we needed the time for more important things. It implied when we are less concerned with the war, […] then we shall take up the matter. If they do anything like this our document will be called the unconstitution of the United States.[251]

Further contributing to the Nisei's predicament was their latent fear that any criticism they uttered would be interpreted as an act of disloyalty. Unlike their parents, who from the first day told the administration when they deemed something unacceptable, the Nisei rarely dared to speak up.[252] Instead, they reduced their mental agony by working hard, engaging in vigorous physical activities and discussing "gripes" among themselves, secretly, or confiding them to their diaries.[253] It was this submissiveness to the authorities – though they changed their attitude, as we shall see later – that led the JERS researchers to the conclusion, that the Issei, who freely expressed their convictions, demanding decent treatment, were the better Americans. And as long as the Nisei, stunned and

247 *Diary*, Ben Iijima, May 22, 1942, JERS: 17:395.
248 Modell (ed.): *Kikuchi Diary*, p. 136.
249 Ibid., p. 152.
250 *Diary*, Doris Hayashi, p. 245, August 19, 1942, JERS: 17:214.
251 *Diary*, Ben Iijima, June 25, 1942, JERS: 17:387.
252 *Letter*, Tom Shibutani to Dr. Thomas, May 11, 1942, JERS: 18:250; *Diary*, Doris Hayashi, p. 10, May 26, 1942, JERS: 17:093; ibid., p. 14, May 28, 1942, JERS: 17:097.
253 Church groups, JACL members and liberal groups met frequently to discuss how to cope with the situation, see *First Month,* Shibutani, Najima, Shibutani, pp. 43-44, JERS: 16:415; ibid., pp. 55-56, JERS: 16:421.

confused, struggled with themselves to regain their voice, the Issei were, one might argue, better Americans indeed.

The question of how to grapple with the injustice of incarceration was a central concern of the penned up community, and we shall return to that issue in the course of the following chapters. For now let us turn back to the start of our digression – the situation in the men's dormitory. After Issei bachelors had repeatedly complained about the unsanitary conditions,[254] which arose from crowding almost 500 men in a single hall without proper ventilation, finally the San Mateo County Health inspectors took on the problem. The inspectors promptly condemned the hall for further dormitory use, and by the end of May all singles had been relocated to the barracks. Henceforth the dormitory served as makeshift classroom for the high school.[255]

One feature of camp life that the evacuees never got used to was communal feeding in mess halls: During the first weeks, the main mess hall beneath the grandstand, capable of holding 500 people, had to serve food to over 3,000 people. Yoshiko Uchida vividly remembered what it meant to line up for food:

> When we arrived, there were six long weaving lines of people waiting to get into the mess hall. […] Shivering in the cold, we pressed close together trying to shield Mama from the wind. As we stood in what seemed a breadline for the destitute, I felt degraded, humiliated, and overwhelmed with a longing for home. And I saw the unutterable sadness on my mother's face. This was only the first of many lines we were to endure, and we soon discovered that waiting in line was as inevitable a part of Tanforan as the north wind that swept in from the bay stirring up all the dust and litter of the camp.[256]

Although with the opening of ten more mess hall the situation was somewhat eased, waiting lines continued to constitute an integral part of the evacuees' lives.[257]

The gloomy mess halls were furnished with backless benches and picnic tables that were too high for children. The first three days, the Army served A Rations and B Rations.[258] The next ten days the evacuees were served lima beans, cold tea, canned food, stale bread, and occasionally Jell-O. Other meals were canned Vienna sausages, potatoes and butterless bread, or chili con carne, corn and bread. The menu of the main mess hall during the second week read like this:[259]

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254 Doris Hayashi, who worked as secretary for the housing office, overheard numerous arguments between upset evacuees and the Caucasian manager. On May 26, for instance, she noted in her diary: "Mr. Gunder is rather harsh with them, but I guess he must be firm. I'm glad there's a girl to translate for him." See *Diary*, Doris Hayashi, p. 126, May 26, 1942, JERS: 17:154.

255 See *Population and Composition*, JERS: 16:328.

256 Uchida: *Desert Exile*, p. 71.

257 Okubo: *Citizen 13660*, p. 86.

258 The Army's standard rations for group feeding: A Rations consisted of semi-perishable and perishable food items requiring refrigeration, food service equipment and personnel. B Rations were served in the field and consisted of canned and dehydrated foods not requiring refrigeration.

259 *Letter*, Tom Shibutani to Dr. Thomas, May 12, 1942, JERS: 18:266.

	Breakfast	Lunch	Dinner
Thursday May 7		stew (peas, carrots, meat), 2 slices of bread, tea	2 tablespoons macaroni, ½ potato, coffee
Friday May 8	3 pancakes, mush, toast, coffee	green vegetables, ½ potato, boiled bread	rice, fish (about 3 mouthful), 2 slices of bread
Saturday May 9	3 pancakes, mush, 2 slices of bread	corned beef and cabbage (canned), 2 slices of bread	roast pork (tiny), potato, canned beans (string), dried figs

Some Issei expressed their desire for Japanese dishes such as *ocha tsuke* (rice soaked in green tea, served with pickled vegetables). Some brought along their chopsticks and were eating with them.[260] Others stayed away for two or three meals relying on food sent in from friends.[261]

Long lines, bad food, and lack of clean dishes caused many complaints against the kitchen and mess hall staff, who could not be faulted for any of these problems.[262] Most of the dishwashers, waiters and servers were between 16 and 18 years of age and braved their "first experience at drudgery work," as one of them proudly observed.[263] Constantly overworked, some quit seeking "better jobs."[264] On May 4 the cooks went on strike, and the kitchen crew and waiters followed suit.[265] The Caucasian chief cook, whom the evacuee workers fiercely criticized for his incompetence and authoritarian style, had to quit. The new Caucasian chief cook was "merely a figure head," as Earle Yusa, one of the mess hall managers stated.[266] In practice, the evacuees took over the kitchen and mess hall management. Earle Yusa concluded that

> the Japanese chefs resented any authority exercised by Caucasian chefs above them and whenever the Caucasian Chefs tried to boss the Japanese Chefs too much, trouble arose because the Japanese Chefs all banded together and presented a united front.[267]

Likewise, the first Caucasian steward was fired after complaints piled up. His successor fared better: He worked closely with the Japanese chefs who planned the menus and even took care of administrative details.[268]

As one by one ten more mess halls opened people got more food, and the congestion was relieved somewhat. The evacuees helped to reduce the mess hall workers' burden by bringing their own dishes and washing them themselves.[269] The administration adopted a ticket system, so that people could not eat more than once, and introduced a shift system with designated eating times at 7

260 *Conditions and Needs at Initial Induction*, Earle Yusa, JERS: 16:481.
261 Uchida: *Desert Exile*, pp. 77 & 84.
262 There were only 1,000 dishes to serve 3,000 people and hot water regularly ran out before all dishes could be washed.
263 *Diary*, Ben Iijima, May 22, 1942, JERS: 17:360. Iijima also noted that many adolescents continued to work even after school started, because few wanted to take up this arduous work for $8 per month.
264 *Conditions and Needs at Initial Induction*, Earle Yusa, JERS: 16:481; *Diary*, anonymous, JERS: 16:177.
265 Modell (ed.): *Kikuchi Diary*, p. 55.
266 *Conditions and Needs at Initial Induction*, Earle Yusa, JERS: 16:489.
267 Ibid., JERS: 16:489.
268 *First Month,* Shibutani, Najima, Shibutani, p. 8, JERS: 16:397.
269 Ibid., p. 45, JERS: 16:416.

and 7:30 a.m., 12 and 12:30 noon, 5 and 5:30 p.m.[270] However, shortcomings and deficiencies remained, in particular a lack of dairy products and Vitamins A, B, B_1, and C.[271] This was hardly surprising since the average cost of feeding a person in Tanforan was 37 cents a day (the Army spent 50 cents a day on active soldiers).[272]

When on May 11 Army officials visited the camp to inspect the food and mess hall situation, the administration had prepared for the evacuees a special treat: "A large bowl full of ravioli, meat, dessert, plenty of rice, bread, a salad, and chocolate drink."[273] Tom Shibutani and his fellow evacuees were delighted, but the treat proved to be a one-time favor by their captors. "On the following day," Shibutani wrote sobered, "we went back to the same old stuff."[274] As it turned out, the Army did not have much interest either in showing the true face of the conditions in Tanforan: When in mid-June the WCCA sent in camera teams to shoot a documentary, the setting was carefully staged.[275] What embittered the evacuees most was the fact that the Army removed the Japanese cooks and replaced them with white cooks. Some were so infuriated by this distortion of circumstances that they refused to eat at the mess hall while the films were being made.[276] That the Army insisted on images showing how white cooks prepared food for the evacuees is emblematic for its paternalistic attitude towards the incarcerated. The main purpose of these documentaries was, of course, to served the Army's propaganda effort.

In the meanwhile, evacuees made the mess halls more habitable. To lessen the bleakness of the buildings, they decorated walls with watercolor paintings and flags. Some mess halls had fresh flowers on every other table, at first donated by a Caucasian florist nurseryman, and later from the camp's own nursery.[277] Children's paintings decorated the bleak walls. As an inmate observed:

> It is very interesting to note how everyone loves to use colors and hang bright pictures on the wall. I think it is a natural tendency for us who see but the dull colors of the barracks, dust and tracks to find delight in simple, bright things. That is why I find the children's drawings in our mess hall so inviting to the eye. The perspective is lopsided, the design is poor, but the colors! How bright with red, yellow, and green splotches, spontaneous – undiluted – make the food tastier.[278]

In addition, mess halls acquired nicknames such as Lakeside Inn, Lettuce Inn, Brass Rail, Coconut Grove, Knotty Pine Inn, and Skyroom.[279] Every other week the cooks put in extra work to surprise their fellow inmates with donuts for breakfast or cookies for dinner. To show their appreciation towards the cooks and mess hall staff, who put in far more than the required 44 hours week for a

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270 *Report on Social Morphology*, JERS: 16:154.
271 Ibid., JERS: 16:156; *First Month*, Shibutani, Najima, Shibutani, pp. 27-28, JERS: 16:407.
272 U.S. Army: *Final Report*, p. 187.
273 *Letter*, Tom Shibutani to Dr. Thomas, May 11, 1942, JERS: 18:249; *Diary*, Ben Iijima, June 20, 1942, JERS: 17:377.
274 *Letter*, Tom Shibutani to Dr. Thomas, May 11, 1942, JERS: 18:249.
275 Modell (ed.): *Kikuchi Diary*, p. 144; *Diary*, Ben Iiyima, June 20, 1942, JERS: 17:377.
276 Uchida: *Desert Exile*, p. 92.
277 *Diary*, Ben Iijima, June 3, 1942, JERS: 17:365; Modell (ed.): *Kikuchi Diary*, p. 126.
278 *Diary*, Ben Iiyima, August 12, 1942, JERS: 17:457-458.
279 *Tanforan Totalizer*, Issue 14, August 8, 1942, p. 8

meager wage of $8 per month, the evacuees developed various customs.[280] For example, after particularly tasty meals, evacuees would gather and yell, "1, 2, 3, banzai!"[281] In another mess hall, the evacuees collected $83 to present to the cooks.[282] Overall, the tense atmosphere of the first month gave way to mutual understanding and solidarity between the mess hall staff and their customers.

Another striking feature was that mess halls engaged in various competitions. For example, there was a competition to determine which mess could operate with the fewest broken dishes.[283] In late July weekly mess ratings were introduced to determine which kitchen was the cleanest.[284] In the week from August 16 to August 22, six kitchens tied for the 1st place with 99 percent, and the remaining five kitchens tied for 2nd with 98 percent. Commented the *Totalizer*:

> The new E banner for 'excellence' was flying over Mess 2 this week on its merit for past and present records, but mess officials believe that it won't be there for long at the present rate of competition.[285]

In Tanforan, the Japanese learned for the first time what free competition meant, that is, competition without facing the discrimination of a predominantly white society. And just as Adam Smith had posited, competition overcame the detriment of greed, benefiting the community as a whole. Yet Smith's "invisible hand" was ultimately hampered by the conditions of captivity, and the evacuees' struggle for betterment remained within the strict limitations the Army set.

Industriousness, however, went only as far as it improved the evacuees' own standing. When in May the sugar beet growers of Idaho, Montana and Oregon requested 3,000 workers from the WCCA camps, fewer than 200 evacuees (from *all* Assembly Centers) answered the call.[286] To win more volunteers, on June 2 a representative of the sugar beet industry visited Tanforan to speak of the "opportunities offered." One of the few questions the inmates raised was "whether there were horse stalls too, in Idaho."[287] Whether it was passive resistance or reluctance to leave their families, only fourteen evacuees signed up although payment was slightly higher than the professional rate ($16 per month) at Tanforan.[288]

The sugar beet harvest remained the only case of private employment. Governor Olsen's plan to keep the evacuees in Assembly Centers through fall, to use them as fruit pickers, was flatly rejected by the War Department.[289] The evacuees saw in Olson's plan the mendacity of California's politicians;

280 Modell (ed.): *Kikuchi Diary*, p. 76.
281 *Diary*, Ben Iijima, July 4, 1942, JERS: 17:398. Some mess halls got a laudable mention in the camp paper, see for example *Tanforan Totalizer*, Issue 12, July 25, 1942, p. 8.
282 Uchida: *Desert Exile,* p. 92.
283 *Tanforan Totalizer*, Issue 12, July 25, 1942, p. 8.
284 *Tanforan Totalizer,* Issue 13, August 1, 1942, p. 8; ibid., Issue 14, August 8, 1942, p. 8.
285 *Tanforan Totalizer,* Issue 17, August 29, 1942, p. 3.
286 *Memorandum, WRA director Eisenhower to Assistant Secretary of War McCloy*, June 8, 1942, in Roger Daniels (ed.): *American Concentration Camps: A Documentary History of the Relocation and Incarceration of Japanese Americans, 1942-1945,* New York: Garland, 1989, Vol. 6. The Army refused to send evacuees before the states had taken all responsibility for transportation, payment, housing and safety.
287 To that the WRA representative, Mr. Howland, replied: "Does the gentlemen in the rear have a horse?" *Diary*, Ben Iijima, June 2, 1942, JERS: 17:364.
288 Modell (ed.): *Kikuchi Diary*, pp. 106-107; *Diary*, Doris Hayashi, p. 31, June 5, 1942, JERS: 17:104.
289 *Memorandum, Secretary of War Stimson to President Roosevelt*, July 7, 1942, in Daniels: *American Concentration*

Henry Tani, the director of Tanforan's high school, wrote to his Caucasian friends:

> [W]e laugh "up our sleeves" when Governor Olson, after lambasting us around and calling us names so that all Japanese in the whole state of California are evacuated, now praises us for being loyal so that we could be released for farm work. Given the chance, I doubt whether any of us would "volunteer" for the farm work that he wants us to do. This may be "unpatriotic" but much rather would we hurry to our relocation areas and there develop agricultural areas, and produce so much surplus foods that we would embarrass the California farm cliques in a few years.[290]

Lastly, the Army attempted to utilize inmates, on a volunteer basis, as a workforce for the war production. In Santa Anita, where evacuees manufactured camouflage nets, it proved to be disappointingly unproductive. In Tanforan such a project never existed. While the Army did consider transferring a part of its camouflage net production to Tanforan, it seems highly unlikely, in view of the above, that Tanforan's inmates would have shown more than lukewarm support for such a project.[291]

Let us now return to the starting point of our digression on outside employment – the catering for evacuees. An interesting aspect was that evacuees supplemented their mess hall menu through official and unofficial channels. Visitors represented one of these channels (see chapter 5). Another source was the center store. Because private enterprises were not allowed in Assembly Centers the WCCA laid down that, "center stores must be prepared to supply the needs of men, women and children at the lowest cost possible."[292] In Tanforan such a store opened in early May. When the administration refused any information on where the money went and how the prices were put together the evacuees became suspicious. Protests mounted because the store was constantly out of stock and took cash only, which was a major impediment since Tanforan had no banking facilities.[293] After much pressure, center director Frank Davis agreed to set up a non-profit canteen, announced as a "Coming Attraction," which was opened on May 23 in the north-east corner of the grandstand.[294] It carried toilet articles, newspapers, cigarettes and groceries such as peanuts, marshmallow bars, animal cookies, graham crackers, ginger, chocolate, lemon and vanilla snaps. Much sought-after goods that

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Camps, Vol. 6. Stimson's memo is worth quoting as it discloses the opportunism of local politicians and Stimson's own critical stance on the evacuation program: "Dear Mr. President, I am informed that that patriot in California, Governor Olson, is hatching up a new project which I fear will make trouble with the Japanese. As you know, the Army has been conducting the evacuation of these Japanese through a series of temporary assembly camps where they are first assembled and held until they can be located in the relocation centers […]. In the beginning of this agitation the Californians were hell-bent for rushing these unfortunate Japanese out of the State anywhere provided it was not California […]. Now Governor Olsen has discovered that the harvesting season is coming for some of the Californian fruits and that it may be profitable for Californians to keep these Japanese huddled up in these assembly camps to be used cheaply on this harvesting. These assembly camps are merely improvised structures where there is considerable danger of overcrowding and epidemics. I do not think that he should be allowed to blow first hot and then cold without any reference to the safety or welfare of these unfortunate people […]. I suggest therefore that you keep this situation in mind in case the Governor approaches you on the subject. Faithfully yours, Secretary of War Henry Stimson."

290 *Letter*, Henry Tani to Mr. and Mrs. Young, July 15, 1942, JERS: 14:032.

291 *Minutes of the Advisory Council,* June 10, as cited in *Diary*, Doris Hayashi, p. 46, June 10, 1942, JERS: 17:111.

292 Wartime Civil Control Administration: *Concentration Camp U.S.A. Regulations. July 18, 1942*, San Mateo: Japanese American Curriculum Project, 1973, pp. 17-18 (WCCA: *Operation Manual*, Section XV).

293 *First Month,* Shibutani, Najima, Shibutani, pp. 32-33, JERS: 16:409-410; Okubo: *Citizen 13660*, pp. 84-85.

294 *Tanforan Totalizer,* Issue 4, June 6, 1942, p. 5.

were seldom available included ice cream, Bireley's grapeade, tomato juice, and Kleenex. Scrip books could be used to pay.[295]

Another source of food was provided by "sympathetic Caucasian employees [who] bought a lot of foodstuff for the residents and brought them in their autos without the WCCA big shots […] finding out about them."[296] After Charles Kikuchi witnessed a soldier passing a Nisei girl a bologna sandwich through the fence he noted in his diary: "[They] must hear we are starving over here."[297]

The housing and feeding situation exemplifies on the one hand the Army's unpreparedness, and on the other the evacuees' doggedness in making the best of it. The same can be said with respect to the sanitary facilities. Latrines, showers and laundries were located in separate buildings and in short supply. Each latrine (since the Army ran the camp, military terminology applied) contained eight toilets, some separated by partitions, some not. By the end of May, after vehement protests, the Army installed partitions in all latrines, but no doors. Everyone able to do so went to the toilets in the grandstand, where there was more privacy. Men even had the choice between "Gents" and "Colored Gents" – by all accounts the evacuees thought both options preferable to the latrines.[298] Washrooms contained eight showers, partitioned, but again without doors or curtains. Quite regularly, there was no hot water. For the Issei, who were used to soaking themselves in deep pine-scented tubs, a ritual they brought over from Japan, the showers were virtually impossible to use. Some evacuees faced the discomfort with humor: a Nisei substituted the word "cold" for the word "hot" on the sign, which read "Turn the hot water off."[299] In the latrines signs were put up reading, "Our aim is to keep the toilets clean; your aim will help!"[300]

For sanitary reasons, the Army placed chlorine foot basins at the entrance to each of the shower rooms. Mine Okubo recalls that the evacuees "were afraid to use this community foot bath and did acrobatic stunts to avoid it."[301] To cope with the muddy shower floors many evacuees made themselves *geta*, Japanese wooden shoes. Because the demand was so large, a small *geta* industry sprung up.[302] On the whole, the sanitary situation was an embarrassing hardship, especially for the elderly people, pregnant women, and the sick.[303]

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295 *Diary*, Earle T. Yusa, JERS: 17:523-530; *Economic Organisation*, JERS: 16:337; *Tanforan Totalizer*, Issue 4, June 6, 1942, p. 5. Starting in June evacuees were given monthly allowances in coupons to pay for community services such as the center store, shoe repair shop and barber shop. The monthly coupon allowance was $1.00 for evacuees under 16, $2.50 for evacuees over 16, $4.50 for married couples, and a maximum of $7.50 for families. See WCCA: *Concentration Camp U.S.A. Regulations*, p. 5 (WCCA: *Operation Manual*, Section XX).
296 *Economic Organisation*, JERS: 16:336.
297 Modell (ed.): *Kikuchi Diary*, p. 107.
298 Ibid., p. 56.
299 *Diary*, Ben Iijima, July 12, 1942, JERS: 17:424.
300 Modell (ed.): *Kikuchi Diary*, p. 77.
301 Okubo: *Citizen 13660*, p. 77. The main problem was that the footbaths had no drains because no metal was available. See *Minutes of House Managers' Meeting*, July 15, 1942, JERS: 14:520.
302 *First Month*, Shibutani, Najima, Shibutani, p. 48, JERS: 16:417.
303 Uchida: *Desert Exile*, p. 76.

By the end of May the Army had finished building six laundries. Due to the numerous families with children in Tanforan they, too, featured the ubiquitous waiting lines.[304] As the hot water usually ran out at 9 a.m., many evacuees got up at 3 in the morning to do their washing; Okubo recalls that the laundry janitor often had to burn the midnight oil for them.[305] Those who arrived too late learned that they could run for a washroom that still had hot water and carry bucketfuls of hot water to the laundry. Yoshiko Uchida, her sister and her mother had to fall back to this practice regularly and remembered that "by the time we had finally hung our laundry on lines […], we were too exhausted to do much else for the rest of the day."[306]

Adding to the discomforts of camp life were tiny fleas that spread from the horse stalls: "[They] bite like hell [and] they certainly make life miserable," noted Charles Kikuchi in his diary on May 7.[307] Mine Okubo laconically stated that, "[w]e had to make friends with the wild creatures in the camp, especially the spiders, mice, and rats, because we were outnumbered."[308] Ben Iijima caught twelve mice in his family's stable within two months.[309] A week later he noted: "Dad caught the seventeenth rat. The other trap had a mouse on it, but it was eaten by another rat. It was in such a horrible mess that I could hardly look at it."[310] As the San Mateo County Health Department learned about these conditions they offered to send in sanitation inspectors to rid mess halls, washrooms, and living quarters of pests. However, the WCCA refused to accept the service under the pretext that the camp fell under Army jurisdiction.[311]

One organization with which the WCCA cooperated was the U.S. Public Health Service (USPHS), which inspected Tanforan at least twice. The first time, two weeks after induction, the inspectors objected mainly to the conditions of the mess halls, and the lack of latrines and showers; three weeks later the number of latrines and showers had been doubled and more hot water boilers placed in mess halls.[312] Still, in its report from June 2 the Public Health Department stated:

> A major problem in all centers has been and continues to be sanitation. That so few epidemics have occurred from unsanitary conditions has been due to the heroic efforts of the management of the centers, the County Health Departments and the Japanese medical staff.[313]

The list of deficiencies is worth quoting in full as it provides a comprehensive summary of the living conditions:

1. Inadequate dishwashing facilities

304 *First Month,* Shibutani, Najima, Shibutani, p. 4, JERS: 16:395.
305 Okubo: *Citizen 13660*, p. 69.
306 Uchida: *Desert Exile*, p. 77.
307 Modell (ed.): *Kikuchi Diary*, pp. 60-61.
308 Okubo: *Citizen 13660*, p. 68.
309 *Diary*, Ben Iijima, July 5, 1942, JERS: 17:404.
310 *Diary*, Ben Iijima, July 12, 1942, JERS: 17:417.
311 *Discussions*, Doris Hayashi, JERS: 16:253.
312 *Politics*, Michio Kunitani, JERS: 16:497. For information on the health situation in Assembly Centers in general one can consult Louis Fiset: "Public Health in World War II Assembly Centers for Japanese Americans," *Bulletin of the History of Medicine* Vol. 73 (1999), pp. 565-584.
313 U.S. Public Health Service, District No. 5: *Report of Activities in the Japanese Evacuation from the West Coast*, June 2, 1942, p. 7, in Daniels (ed.): *American Concentration Camps*, Vol. 6.

2. Lack of complete screening in barracks, hospitals, infirmaries, toilets and kitchens
3. Improperly placed, poorly constructed, and insufficient number of toilets
4. No bathing facilities for babies
5. Improper garbage storage
6. Inadequate refrigeration
7. Floors and walls of barracks, hospitals, infirmaries, kitchens and mess halls that are not fly-tight
8. Insufficient crockery and dishes
9. Tin cups with rolled margins which make adequate cleaning impossible
10. No toilets or hand-washing facilities easily available to the cooks and waiters
11. Inadequate disposal of laundry and kitchen waste waters[314]

The report concluded:

> There is little that the U.S. Public Health Service can do directly about the above unsanitary conditions. The undesireable [sic] conditions have been called to the attention of the W.C.C.A. and the management of the centers repeatedly. Until they are corrected, epidemics of gastro-intestinal and other types of diseases must be expected.[315]

Thus, although the Public Health Service monitored unhygienic conditions and eliminated some of the gross inadequacies, it was ultimately limited in its actions. The evacuees were essentially on their own when it came to make Tanforan a more livable place. This was particularly severe with respect to the hospital situation. Here, hard work and ingenuity – which helped to improve significantly the housing and mess hall situation – could not compensate for the lack of facilities and medical support. A JERS study commented on Tanforan's hospital:

> [T]he least prepared division is the medical center. Tanforan probably has a better staff of doctors, dentists, optometrists, and nurses than any other Assembly Center, but the facilities are so inadequate that the staff cannot possibly give the service that they wish to give. […] Indeed, the hospital (or the excuse for the hospital) is a pitiful sight.[316]

Medical service was free[317] but even for a prison health service was inadequate: During the first ten days one woman doctor served the needs of 3,000 evacuees. Newborn babies had to be put in cardboard boxes. Dentists had no tools, not even a chair, and the optometrists could do nothing besides conducting eye tests and sending out glasses for repair.[318] According to the Tanforan hospital report of May 18, many cases of German measles were coming into camp as new evacuees arrived. When a Japanese doctor asked a representative of the Public Health Service to establish a quarantine building, he replied: "Well, they all have to get measles some time so let them get it."[319] The main concern of the Public Health Service was to vaccinate the inmates against typhoid, smallpox, and diphtheria. After a month working overtime, the evacuee doctors had managed to inoculate the population.[320]

Though most diseases were not critical, the inability to treat them properly added to the discomfort. Almost all evacuees had a cold most of the time, and due to malnutrition skin problems

314 Ibid., pp. 7-8.
315 Ibid., p. 8.
316 *First Month,* Shibutani, Najima, Shibutani, p. 22, JERS: 16:404. The physician-to-population ratio in San Francisco was 1:480 as compared to 1:777 in Los Angeles or 1:1,744 in Seattle. See Fiset: *Public Health in World War II Assembly Centers*, pp. 569-570.
317 WCCA: *Concentration Camp U.S.A. Regulations*, pp. 11-12 (WCCA: *Operation Manual*, Section XXXII).
318 *First Month,* Shibutani, Najima, Shibutani, p. 24, JERS: 16:405.
319 *Tanforan Hospital Report*, May 18, 1942, University Research Library, UCLA. As cited by Michi Weglyn: *Years of Infamy: The Untold Story of America's Concentration Camps*, New York: Morrow Quill Paperbacks Inc., 1976, p. 71.
320 *Tanforan Totalizer*, Issue 19, September 12, 1942, p. 11; Okubo: *Citizen 13660*, p. 54.

were wide-spread.[321] Digestive problems persisted throughout the five months in which Tanforan was in operation, and two or three major outbreaks of diarrhea made the lack of medical support painfully evident. As a house manager noted on May 20:

> For the first time last night, we had some cases of vomiting and diarrhea on a wholesale scale. In our area alone there were 30 and about 400 in another area. Most probable cause was drinking of too much cold water on extremely hot days and the other reason may be a mild form of food poisoning. Cold ham was served, and since Mess Halls ran out of ice, food might have spoiled. At any rate, the doctors in charge wouldn't come out to see the patient, but they sent interns. Patients wanted doctors and they "beefed" saying doctors should come out. Uyeyama is head of staff and he told house managers who went after him that if the patient really wanted to see him, the patient ought to come see him at the hospital. So, Doc. Kitagawa was pulled out of bed to attend to number of cases. I went around with him, but he couldn't do anything to relieve the patients since he has no medical supplies. There's absolutely nothing at the hospitals. He had more at his home than what we have all together here for 8,000.[322]

The military police, disconcerted by the sudden turmoil, first feared a riot. Upon discovering the cause, they put searchlights on that area to guide people to and from the latrines. An inmate remembered: "This proved very embarrassing, tho' [sic] helpful to the individuals."[323]

What further aggravated an efficient health care was the administration's unwillingness to trust the evacuees even in minor matters. Everything pertaining health had to go through the hospital: People with hay fever or asthmatic patients needed a prescription before they could get a mattress; people with high blood pressure needed a prescription before they got milk; diabetics received no care unless the doctor specified that the individual was diabetic, and so forth.[324] Thus the doctors spent hours upon hours taking blood samples, sending them out, getting the required information and filling out forms for the administration so that in the end some people could get a mattress instead of the straw tic. Summarizing the situation, a JERS study stated that the evacuee staff "can be commended for their hard and earnest work, but the lack of adequate medical facilities, the lack of drugs and medicine, the lack of cooperation on part of the administrative officers is inexcusable."[325]

Eventually, a series of mishaps lead to what JERS researchers called "a minor revolution against the rule of the administration."[326] The first mishap occurred on May 27: A mother of five children lay dying in the San Mateo County hospital while members of her family could not see her "as they had too much red tape to wade thru." Although the administration had been informed in time of her critical condition, she passed away without seeing any of her relatives.[327] The second incident happened on June 1: A prematurely born baby died because the hospital manager was unwilling to cut

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321 Okubo: *Citizen 13660*, p. 56; Uchida: *Desert Exile*, p. 91. Indeed, every single diary I read at some point referred to serious illness in the family. For an account from the perspective of a pregnant woman, see *Diary*, Earle Yusa, July 16-September 29, 1942, JERS: 17:520-548.
322 *Letter*, Fred Hoshiyama to Line, May 21, 1942, JERS: 18:126.
323 *Discussions*, Doris Hayashi, JERS: 16:255.
324 Ibid., pp. 22-23, JERS: 16:404-405.
325 Ibid., p. 24, JERS: 16:405.
326 *First Month*, Shibutani, Najima, Shibutani, p. 56, JERS: 16:421.
327 *Diary*, anonymous, May 27, 1942, JERS: 16:085. The WCCA allowed $85.00 for undertaking services and, in case of necessity, an additional $50.00 to provide cemeterial services, see WCCA: *Concentration Camp U.S.A. Regulations*, p. 1 (WCCA: *Operation Manual*, Section VII).

the red tape and transfer the mother to the San Mateo County hospital, which was only a twenty minute ride away from Tanforan.[328] Neither of these incidents was a "tragic accident" in the sense that it was beyond the power of the administration to prevent them. On the contrary, everything indicated that the administration could have made the difference by sticking to common sense instead of bureaucratic procedures. The primary focus of the evacuees' wrath was the hospital manager, Mr. Woelflen. Convinced of his incompetence and fearing for his safety, the administration eventually released him.[329] With him left Dr. Hajime Uyeyama, Mr. Woelflen's most outspoken critic. The unamendable Japanese doctor was "transferred" to the Tule Lake Relocation Camp.[330]

As mentioned, these events were important because they had ramifications beyond the immediate sphere (albeit "revolution" might be overstated): The house managers "took up the cry," as a JERS study put it, and pressured the administration to give the evacuees more responsibility in organizing everyday matters – with success. Moreover, it was during this "period of revolt" that the administration finally affirmed the long-demanded election for an evacuee council, to better serve the needs of the inmates (see chapter 8).[331]

Mr. Woelflen's successor, Dr. Don Wilde from San Mateo County Hospital, was not only an experienced doctor himself but also successful in pressuring the Army to improve health standards. In fact, he was much liked by the evacuees.[332] Nevertheless, a single person could not remove the limitations imposed by the camp's temporary nature and by the Army's unwillingness to allocate more resources than absolutely necessary.[333] Thus the hospital remained a makeshift affair, understaffed and ill-equipped.[334]

A contrasting view on the health care situation, and on living conditions in general, can be found if one examines the Army records. An in-house report pertaining to Tanforan, conducted on July

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328 *First Month,* Shibutani, Najima, Shibutani, pp. 23-24, JERS: 16:405.

329 *Diary*, anonymous, May 27, 1942, JERS: 16:085; *Discussions*, Doris Hayashi, 16:253; *Diary*, Doris Hayashi, July 12, 1942, JERS: 17:166. The records are somewhat contradictory as to the cause but it suggests itself that his incompetence and the evacuees' dissatisfaction were the crucial factors. From the very beginning evacuees criticized him as somebody who "did not know anything about medicine […] and did not know anything about administration." *Conditions and Needs at Initial Induction*, Earle Yusa, JERS: 16:488.

330 According to an eyewitness, Dr. Uyeyama had "told Davis off and he said he would resign if he did not get better cooperation from the administration." Modell (ed.): *Kikuchi Diary*, p. 144. Dr. Uyeyama was the son of Uyeyama Jitaro, a member of the Social Revolutionary Party, the Issei anarchist organization formed in Oakland in 1906.

331 *First Month*, Shibutani, Najima, Shibutani, p. 56, JERS: 16:421.

332 *Diary*, Ben Iijima, July 2, 1942, JERS: 17:395; *Tanforan Personnel*, JERS: 16:488.

333 According to the Army's *Final Report* the costs merely for turning Tanforan into an Assembly Center added up to $1,147,216.00, which equals over $25 million at current values, using the unskilled wage rate. Expenditures for operating and supplying Tanforan were $260,466.48. The total costs of the evacuation program were $88,679,716.69, which equals over $2 billion dollars at current values, again using the unskilled wage rate. See U.S. Army: *Final Report*, pp. 346-350. For calculations using different indexes, such as the CPI or GDP per capita, see http://www.measuringworth.com/calculators/compare/ (consulted 03/30/2007).

334 By mid-August, the hospital treated around 200 people a day, mostly dental cases, employing 188 persons, including ten physicians, eight dentists, and nine registered nurses. 47 of the 64 babies born were delivered in Tanforan. Serious cases had to be sent to the San Mateo County hospital. Despite the many deficiencies remaining, WCCA officials and public health authorities rated the medical set-up in Tanforan as the best in the Assembly Centers. See *Tanforan Totalizer*, Issue 15, August 15, 1942, p. 4; ibid., Issue 19, September 12, 1942, p. 11; U.S. Army: *Final Report*, pp. 190-204, 377; Fiset: *Public Health in World War II Assembly Centers*, pp. 565-584.

2, found few points to criticize: The inspectors praised the cleanliness, neatness, and frugality and contended, somewhat ominously, that "there appeared to be adequate hospital and nursing care." Only dishwashing facilities and diet room conditions were criticized. The report concluded: "The conviction after spending one day [in Tanforan] is that a very intelligent job is being done by the Army officers and civilian officials in charge of supervision."[335]

The discrepancy between the Public Health Service report and the WCCA report can be explained by considering four facts. First, there was a month between the two inspections, a time during which conditions had improved considerably. Secondly, the Army's inspection was only a cursory one. Third, the Army was naturally interested to gloss over inadequacies, since any criticism meant self-criticism. Finally, in comparison to some other Assembly Centers Tanforan appeared indeed to be more livable.[336]

The present chapter has shown that while the Army provided the basic facilities and maintenance, making Tanforan a habitable place largely depended on the evacuees' initiative and efforts. In other words, it was less *because* of the administration, but more *in spite* of it that the physical setup improved within the narrow frame the Army set. We have also seen that after a month of sluggish advances evacuees grew more and more self-reliant and simultaneously dissatisfied with the administration. We have furthermore gained first insights into dominant themes of evacuee life, among them the different strategies of dealing with the adverse conditions and psychological stress, and the negotiation of power between prisoners and keepers. The following chapter further elaborates some of these points by examining the work of the house managers.

335 Mary I. Barber, Lieutenant Joseph W. Brearley: *Report of Visit to Tanforan Assembly Center,* July 4, 1942, in Daniels (ed.): *American Concentration Camps*, Vol. 6.

336 This is a tentative claim, based on a comparison with Santa Anita where twice as many people were concentrated on a similar-sized area. See Anthony L. Lehman: *Birthright of Barbed Wire. The Santa Anita Assembly Center for the Japanese*, Los Angeles: Westernlore Press, 1970. Also, the Bay Area has a moderate climate so that the lack of adequate housing was presumably less grave than elsewhere. See Okubo: *Citizen 13660*, p. 56; *Diary*, Ben Iijima, May 22, 1942, JERS: 17:361; ibid., June 8, 1942, JERS: 17:370.

4 – The House Managers

> *It is true, now that we think of it, that our first week of adjustment was the hardest. On every hand was cause for complaint. Crowded into cramped quarters, lining up for meals, the perennial dust and dirt, the lack of privacy and the inconvenience of going some distance to the wash rooms, laundry rooms, etc. – there are terrific shocks to which we have now become quite accustomed […].*
>
> – Henry Tani[337]

For the Japanese Americans in Tanforan the first contact point for everyday needs were the house managers. According to Michio Kunitani, this was because

> they were in a position to bring the grievances of the people to the attention of the administration. If a house manager was a good trouble shooter and produced immediate results as far as physical comforts were concerned, he could have been mayor of Tanforan as far as the people were concerned. […] In their daily meetings they discussed almost every aspect of center activity, physical facilities, food, labor problems, morale, education, recreation, housing, dissemination of information, guest visits, morals, center store and many more such problems.[338]

Not only did the house managers ameliorate the hardships of camp life; they also formed the primary means of communication between prisoners and keepers, at least until the election of an evacuee Advisory Council on June 16.[339] Mediating between the evacuees' interests and administrative authorities, the work of the house managers illustrates how prisoners and keepers communicated interests and negotiated power. Thus the present chapter portrays their achievements in organizing everyday life, as well as their endeavors in coordinating evacuee activities with the administration.

For every 150 people there was one house manager. The appointment of house managers was left to the evacuees. The selection procedure was informal: The Caucasian chief of the housing division, who commuted daily from Berkeley, accepted whoever his Nisei assistant suggested to him.[340] Camp director Frank Davis, disapproving of this laissez faire procedure, reproved the housing chief "for doing favors for the residents" but refrained from interfering.[341]

JERS researcher Tom Shibutani described the house managers as a "motley group," including all generations, religions and political preferences. What distinguished them was the ability to speak both English and Japanese. Thus, Kibei made up a disproportionately large percentage. Also, initially young Nisei predominated, but the proportion of Issei increased as many Nisei felt overburdened and moved into less laborious jobs in education and recreation. For the same reason few men with young

337 *Letter*, Henry Tani to Mr. and Mrs. Young, July 15, 1942, JERS: 14:032.
338 *Politics*, Michio Kunitani, JERS: 16:375.
339 After June 16, the Advisory Council took over many of the house managers' organizational tasks, but they remained the backbone for the Japanese-American community with regard to everyday issues.
340 Some house managers merely got appointed because they were friends of the evacuee foreman. However, nepotism had no long-term effects, as those incapable to handle the tasks soon resigned, passing responsibility to more competent inmates. See *Conditions and Needs at Initial Induction*, Earle Yusa, JERS: 16:482-483.
341 *Administrative Personalities*, anonymous, p. 13, JERS: 16:334.

children became house managers because it was a full-time job that left no time for the family. Most house mangers did their work out of idealism and were "willing to work all night if the residents got into trouble."[342] Not a single house manager resigned when the low wages rate of $12 per month was announced, because they considered their work as an obligation to the community and to the common good.[343]

As mentioned above, their primary task was to improve the living conditions, which included a plethora of duties: They took upon them the task of getting brooms, mops, soap, buckets, brushes and blankets from the administration. They ensured that the packages left by visitors were delivered by volunteer messengers to the respective residents. They organized the roll call. They also took on the duty of being responsible for a general clean-up of Tanforan every Saturday at 1:30 p.m. They disseminated information released by the administration, investigated the need for fresh straw for mattresses, and when the electricians' night shift was withdrawn they assumed the task of replacing fuses in emergencies. They pushed for more oil heaters for sick people. They put up signs asking residents to take down their washing as soon as dry to free the clotheslines for others. They assisted in collecting sugar and phonograph records and in distributing scrip books and paychecks.[344]

The house managers also determined house rules and explained them in English and Japanese. The most common rules were: All the rooms had to be kept clean at all times; toilets and showers adjacent to the barrack were to be cleaned in rotation by every able-bodied individual not engaged in full-time work; unnecessary noise was not to be made after 9:30 p.m.; electric plates and heaters were to be used at designated times to prevent fuses blowing.[345] The JERS researchers noted in their report:

> In regard to [WCCA] regulations it might be said that very few people actually took the trouble to read them and consequently they were very seldom followed *in toto*. [In contrast], house rules, determined by the House Managers and explained to everyone in both English and Japanese, were usually closely observed.[346]

In their role as liaison between the evacuees and the administration, the house managers urged regular meetings with the heads of the various divisions to better coordinate efforts.[347] But most divisional chiefs soon came to resent these meetings, in which they had to face a barrage of questions and complaints. As a JERS study put it: "After the […] divisional heads had gone through this experience, [some], especially Mr. McDonald the canteen manager, refused to come."[348] Frustrated with persistent criticism, the administration eventually threatened to blacklist its most outspoken critics, whereupon some house managers even pondered an "appeal to the Army for justice."[349] But as

342 *First Month*, Shibutani, Najima, Shibutani, p. 66, JERS: 16:426.
343 Ibid., p. 66, JERS: 16:426.
344 To coordinate the various tasks the house managers met every morning at 8:30. See *Tanforan Totalizer*, Issue 9, July 4, 1942, p. 2; ibid., Issue 13, August 1, 1942, p. 2; ibid., Issue 15, August 15, 1942, p. 2; *First Month*, Shibutani, Najima, Shibutani, pp. 9-10, JERS: 16:398.
345 *Conditions and Needs at Initial Induction*, Earle Yusa, JERS: 16:480.
346 *First Month*, Shibutani, Najima, Shibutani: p. 38, JERS: 16:412.
347 *Minutes of the House Managers' Meeting*, May 21-July 4, 1942, JERS: 14:460-510.
348 *First Month*, Shibutani, Najima, Shibutani, p. 67, JERS: 16:427; Modell (ed.): *Kikuchi Diary*, p. 105.
349 *First Month*, Shibutani, Najima, Shibutani, p. 67, JERS: 16:427. See also John Modell (ed.): *The Kikuchi Diary:*

the evacuees were in a legal vacuum between civilian and military jurisdiction, this appeal merely meant an appeal to the goodwill of the Army; without martial law declared, they could not appeal formally to a military court. This was the predicament of the incarcerated. And as the following quote indicates, they were well aware of their predicament:

> [Blacklisting is] a terrible weapon to hold over the heads of the residents. Since all the residents are at the mercy of the administration, they can get away with anything as long as they can threaten those who object with blacklisting. Anyone intelligent enough to question the motives of someone in the administration can be sent into a prison camp. This is highly undemocratic and cannot be justified even under military rule. Even the military has courts, but Tanforan has none.[350]

The absence of a legal basis for their incarceration, and thus the absence of a legal body to sue for their rights, remained a constant impediment as the evacuees struggled to improve their situation. Talks between house managers and the administration remained cumbersome and frustrating for both sides. Nevertheless, after a month of persistent efforts, most evacuees agreed that the discomforts were now bearable, albeit physical hardships remained intense, in particular for the elderly and frail. Having physically adjusted to the discomforts, however, evacuees found that emotional adjustment to captivity proved far more complicated. What it meant for the Nikkei community to be unfree, and how they coped with captivity, will be examined in the following chapter.

Chronicle from an American Concentration Camp: The Tanforan Journals of Charles Kikuchi, Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1973, p. 105.

350 *First Month*, Shibutani, Najima, Shibutani, p. 80, JERS: 16:433.

5 – Features of Confinement

> *An Assembly Center is a convenient gathering point […] where evacuees live temporarily while awaiting the opportunity for orderly, planned movement to a Relocation Center outside the military area.*
>
> – Wartime Relocation Authority[351]
>
> *I know a prison when I see it, and Tanforan was a prison with watchtowers and guns. […] Guards with machine guns stood at the gates. I couldn't understand why innocent citizens were treated like this.*
>
> – James Purcell[352]

Every day at sunrise Tatsui Ogawa and Guy Uyama, U.S. Army veterans of World War I, unfurled the star-spangled banner at the center flag pole. On Saturdays and Sundays, trumpeters joined in the ceremony with the playing of two official army pieces, "To the Colors" and "Retreat."[353] And every time, shortly after the flag had reached the top, the howling of a siren signaled the daily morning count, urging them to hurry back to their barracks and horse stalls.

While the physical strain from the sub-standard living conditions caused considerable discomfort, the stigma and psychological strain of living in captivity was more serious and persevering. Although the Army tried to downplay the prison-like nature of the camp, the features of confinement were too obvious for the evacuees to ignore. The daily roll call, strict visiting regulations, the ever-present guards and Internal Police, as well as two camp-wide searches – all that reminded the incarcerated that freedom, though it seemed just around the corner, was beyond their reach. This chapter looks at the everyday features of imprisonment, first, to explore how the evacuees made sense of their captivity, and secondly, to examine how wardens and prisoners interacted at the borderline between compound and freedom.

One rule that every evacuee loathed was the daily roll call. While one could avoid looking at the sentry towers, nobody could ignore the daily head count. On June 17, the Army ruled that twice a day a roll call was to be held, one at 6:40 a.m. and one at 6:25 p.m.[354] The camp director, Frank Davis, did not think much of the Army's order. In a meeting with the freshly elected evacuee Advisory Council he confided: "I want to get it over in ten minutes. I can't tell you when it's to start. It's a direct order from General DeWitt. What he wants it for, I don't know."[355] Frank Davis was sensitive enough

351 War Relocation Authority: *The War Relocation Work Corps. A Circular of Information for Enlistees and Their Families*, Washington, D.C., 1942, p. 2. The WRA distributed this booklet in Tanforan to inform evacuees of the setup regarding work in WRA Relocation camps.
352 Interview with James Purcell. As cited by Irons: *Justice at War*, pp. 101-102. James Purcell visited Tanforan several times to interview Mitsuye Endo and other incarcerated state workers in order to file a writ of habeas corpus petition on their behalf. This request for a writ became the landmark Supreme Court case *Ex parte Endo*, 323 U.S. 283 (1944).
353 *Tanforan Totalizer*, Issue 15, August 15, 1942, p. 9.
354 *Information Bulletin No. 5*, June 13, 1942, JERS: 14:194; *Information Bulletin No. 7*, June 15, 1942, JERS: 14:177; *Tanforan Totalizer*, Issue 5, June 13, 1942, p. 3.
355 *Protocol, Advisory Council Meeting*, June 17, 1942, JERS: 14:375.

to transfer the responsibility of the daily count to the evacuees. Thus, every house manager appointed several house captains to take care of the task. In the morning the house captains counted the residents as they entered the mess hall.[356] In the evening a siren call sent everybody scurrying home; then the house captains checked each stall and apartment to see if all residents were present, and after about ten minutes they blew a whistle to signal that the evacuees were allowed to leave their rooms.[357] The task was undertaken with varying degrees of thoroughness, all in all being rather lax.[358] Most house captains despised what they did, but they preferred to do it themselves rather than let their wardens do it. A house manager commented:

> We can't get out even if we wanted to with barbed-wire fence and armed sentries every 50 feet and watch tower guards, but we must be counted twice daily. If this isn't a form of putting salt on wounds, and getting used to the concentration methods of other countries, I don't know what it is.[359]

Charles Kikuchi wrote in his diary: "Don't see the necessity [for a roll call] here, but there must be a reason."[360] Ben Iijima noted: "It's a terrific nuisance and silly and makes me feel more as though I were in a concentration camp. It hurts one's pride to be counted each morning and afternoon."[361] Another evacuee wrote to a friend outside: "[I]t's asinine, but it's army's orders. Imagine making such a count when we are enclosed within barbed wire fence and guards walking every 50 feet and sentries in watch towers every 100 yards with guns ready to kill."[362]

Fences and watchtowers, "to prevent unauthorized departure of evacuees," as the Army put it, precluded any attempts to escape.[363] There were a couple of instances when older people who had poor memories tried to get past the gate while they wandered about disoriented during the night, and the guards were not always gentle in reminding them that they could not leave.[364] There is only one recorded case of an inmate who managed to get out. According to the *San Francisco Chronicle* of May 13, 1942, twenty-one-year-old Clarence Sadamune, who had a Caucasian mother and whose two brothers served in the Army, escaped from Tanforan to volunteer to the Army. He was refused, apprehended and brought back to Tanforan.[365] Shortly after he was transferred to the Poston

356 Because not everybody got up for breakfast, some house captains conducted the count at the barracks before the residents left for breakfast.
357 *Diary*, Ben Iijima, August 2, 1942, JERS: 17:440; Okubo: *Citizen 13660*, p. 59.
358 *Diary*, anonymous, pp. 11-12, June 17, 1942, JERS: 16:179-180; *Discussions*, Doris Hayashi, JERS: 16:248; John Modell (ed.): *The Kikuchi Diary: Chronicle from an American Concentration Camp: The Tanforan Journals of Charles Kikuchi*, Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1973, p. 147; Yoshiko Uchida: *Desert Exile. The Uprooting of a Japanese American Family*, Seattle and London: University of Washington Press, 1982, p. 93; The *Tanforan Totalizer* informed the evacuees on July 4 that "the administration has ordered the house captains to be stricter in taking the daily roll calls, and no one should be seen wandering about the grounds at 6:45 a.m. and 6:30 p.m." *Tanforan Totalizer*, Issue 8, July 4, 1942, p. 2.
359 *Political Activities*, anonymous, JERS: 16:351.
360 Modell (ed.): *Kikuchi Diary*, p. 120.
361 *Diary*, Ben Iijima, July 12, 1942, JERS: 17:418.
362 *Letter*, Fred Hoshiyama to Lincoln Kanai, June 16, 1942, JERS: 18:135.
363 *Memorandum: Functions of Military Police Units at Centers for Japanese Evacuees*, WCCA to the Commanding Generals of the Western Defense Command, JERS: 12:131.
364 Some guards hit those inmates on the head. See *Tanforan Hospital Report*, May 18, 1942, University Research Library, UCLA. As cited by Michi Weglyn: *Years of Infamy: The Untold Story of America's Concentration Camps*, New York: Morrow Quill Paperbacks Inc., 1976, p. 71.
365 *San Francisco Chronicle*, May 13, 1942.

Relocation Camp in Arizona. In Tanforan he became a sort of urban legend, and people mused that he would escape from Poston, too.[366] Although there was only this one documented attempt, there was an abundance of rumors of escape.[367] These stories express a persevering desire to regain freedom even though nobody seriously considered breaking out.

Security regulations required evacuees to stay at least ten feet away from the fence, a regulation that they willingly followed, for the fence was a painful reminder of their imprisonment.[368] Those who came too close to the fence, like Kay and Yoshiko Uchida who wanted to greet their former neighbors, learned quickly that the guards took their duties seriously.[369] Yet some inmates could not resist teasing their wardens: fourteen-year-old Albert Nabeshima waited for a moment in which the guards were not paying attention, then rushed to the fence, poked his fingers outside the steel fence and exclaimed: "Gee I want to touch free air. This is free air!"[370]

The majority refrained from such provocations, but they could not escape the prison atmosphere. Every time Charles Kikuchi caught sight of a watch tower he felt a sting of bitterness: "I saw a soldier in a tall guardhouse near the barbed wire fence and did not like it because it reminds me of a concentration camp."[371] Doris Hayashi, too, became aware of the disconcerting reality after witnessing the elaborate security procedure at the front gate.[372] However, she reacted differently, noting in her diary: "It seemed so like a concentration camp when that happened, that we all laughed embarrassingly."[373] This embarrassing laugh illustrates, in a nutshell, that most evacuees refused to acknowledge their captivity and at the same time painfully realized it.

In spite of the Army's rule that guards were not allowed to speak to evacuees except on business,[374] there were a few instances when some friendly words were exchanged. Some evacuees even pitied the soldiers, musing that they were merely "young, nice kids."[375] Wrote Charles Kikuchi:

> The armed soldier, some lonely boy from the middle west, paces back and forth up the main gate. In the sentry boxes, the soldiers look bored. They probably are more bored than the residents here.[376]

While the fence represented the border between freedom and captivity, there were windows

366 *First Month*, Shibutani, Najima, Shibutani, p. 70, JERS: 14:428.
367 Ibid., p. 77, JERS: 16:432; Modell (ed.): *Kikuchi Diary*, pp. 86-87.
368 *Center Regulations*, WCCA, p. 18, JERS: 12:323; *Tanforan Totalizer,* Issue 12, July 25, 1942, p. 2.
369 Uchida: *Desert Exile*, p. 99.
370 *Diary*, Ben Iijima, July 7, 1942, JERS: 17:405.
371 Modell (ed.): *Kikuchi Diary*, p. 54.
372 The event that conjured up concentration camp images was the departure of an Army truck shipping evacuees to the Manzanar Relocation Camp: A soldier counted the evacuees as they entered the closed deck. After the truck passed the gate, it was stopped and a soldier opened the door to do a second count. See *Diary*, Doris Hayashi, p. 208, July 27, 1942, JERS: 17:194.
373 *Diary*, Doris Hayashi, p. 208, July 27, 1942, JERS: 17:194.
374 "Evacuees are prohibited to contact […] any military police personnel […] except for official business, and then only when such contact is initiated by military personnel." And: "Fraternization between evacuees and Interior Police is prohibited." See *Center Regulations*, WCCA, pp. 18-20, JERS: 12:323-324; see also Wartime Civil Control Administration: *Concentration Camp U.S.A. Regulations. July 18, 1942*, San Mateo: Japanese American Curriculum Project, 1973, p. 12 (WCCA: *Operation Manual*, Section XXV).
375 Modell (ed.): *Kikuchi Diary*, p. 107.
376 Ibid., pp. 156-157.

through which the evacuees kept in touch with their former lives in freedom. The most common way to make contact with the outside world was to come to the reception hall in the grandstand, where the inmates were allowed to receive visitors. People who came to see the evacuees included Japanese with special permits to work outside: Dr. Yanaga and Prof. Nahanura, both teaching Japanese to Navy men; Mari Okazaki who worked in the WCCA headquarters in San Francisco, Chiyo Nao who worked as translator for the CBS. The majority of visitors, however, were former employers of Japanese Americans, fellow students and colleagues from university, and friends from the YMCA and YWCA.[377] Among the prominent visitors was Peter Ray from Duke Ellington's band, and Helen Gahagan Douglas, a noted California Liberal.[378] In particular the Nisei utilized the visiting privilege extensively, for a variety of reasons. As a JERS study put it:

> Having Caucasian friends became a vogue after a few weeks passed, partly because lack of facilities (mostly food is brought, but also ironing boards, brooms, wash tubs, toilet paper, coca cola, soap), partly because out of pride and prestige.[379]

Others, like Ben Iijima, went to the grandstand in order to escape the gloomy mood in the camp and to get a sense of contact with the outside world. Occasionally he was able to relish blissful scenes:

> There was a naval officer visiting [and a] Filipino who was embracing his wife; both were in tears. A prominent lady with a fur coat was looking around for her former cook. Her arms were filled with bags of pastries and fresh fruits.[380]

Iijima resolved that the majority of visitors were "sincerely concerned and interested" in the evacuees.[381] Other evacuees perceived this very interest as rather humiliating. As Charles Kikuchi noted: "Lots of visitors as usual. Many of them probably came out of curiosity to look at us in the camp. Makes one feel like being either in a zoo or a prison.[382] To "feel like" in a prison was quite a common sensation. But rarely did Kikuchi – like the vast majority of his fellow incarcerees – rationalize imprisonment, for it still was a too painful reality to acknowledge openly.

While the WCCA set forth the basic rules pertaining to visitors, camp directors had considerable freedom as to when and under which conditions visitors could be seen, and what they were allowed to bring in.[383] Visiting times were from ten to twelve in the morning, and from one to four in the afternoon.[384] In the beginning, visitors could bring anything except contraband.[385] Any package was either opened or got stuck through with long needles. The visitors themselves were

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377 *Diary*, Doris Hayashi, p. 19, May 31, 1942, JERS: 17:098; Uchida: *Desert Exile*, pp. 84-85; *First Month*, Shibutani, Najima, Shibutani, p. 44, JERS: 16:415.
378 Modell (ed.): *Kikuchi Diary*, p. 126, 184.
379 *Report on Social Morphology*, JERS: 16:147.
380 *Diary*, Ben Iijima, May 22, 1942, JERS: 17:395.
381 Ibid., June 6, 1942, JERS: 17:368.
382 Modell (ed.): *Kikuchi Diary*, p. 141.
383 WCCA: *Concentration Camp U.S.A. Regulations*, pp. 9-10 (WCCA: *Operation Manual*, Section XXVII).
384 *Information Bulletin No. 6: Regulations for Visiting*, May 14, 1942, JERS: 14:181; Okubo: *Citizen 13660*, p. 79; *First Month*, Shibutani, Najima, Shibutani, pp. 35-36, JERS: 16:411.
385 The list of contraband included tools that could be used as a weapon, Japanese literature, alcoholic beverages, short-wave radios, and cameras. See WCCA: *Concentration Camp U.S.A. Regulations*, pp. 3-4 (WCCA: *Operation Manual*, Section XVII).

casually searched and forbidden to enter the compound proper.[386] In the first weeks, however, enforcement was so lax that, as Charles Kikuchi noted on May 6, "[it] is possible to sneak visitors off to the stable (under some pretext)."[387] A week later he wrote:

> Alice and Jack have cultivated Sergeant Boyd Horton to such a point that he gives our visitors special privileges. [Sergeant Horton] expects to be sent overseas at any moment. He has a heart and does not turn his men in if they talk to the Nisei through the fence.[388]

The Internal Police chief tried to abolish such practices, but when the evacuees protested and the camp director refused to back up stricter enforcement, he resigned.[389]

Between May 14 and May 24, 1,135 visitors came to Tanforan, and as the number increased steadily, the administration saw itself compelled to introduce more restrictive regulations.[390] Beginning on July 1, visitors had to fill in an application and received blue badges before they were allowed to enter the compound.[391] Waiting time averaged at 45 minutes, and the visitors standing in line had to put up with being called "Jap lovers" by people driving by in cars.[392] The evacuees, too, complained about the maltreatment of their visitors,[393] who, in spite of it all, were not deterred. Evacuees continued to rely on supplies from the outside, as this account illustrates:

> [Our] visitors brought a sewing machine, clothes and books, etc. from home, and cookies and jams, as well as magazines: Time, Collier's, Life, Esquire. It took [our] visitor a long time to get in today, because they asked questions – name, address, employment, and purpose of visit, as well as searched for contraband, etc. – 3 copies, each made out individually. This took 15 minutes for each visitor, so they had to wait 30 minutes in line. It was feared that the food wouldn't reach the barrack, but it did.[394]

On July 1, Charles Kikuchi, while running errands in the Service Division, spotted a notice on the wall prescribing that, "all Negro visitors [are to] be checked closely and their slips be kept in a separate file." His explanation: "Evidently they think that there is a great danger of the Japanese stirring up the Negroes."[395] Whatever its original purpose, the administration utilized the new registration system to blacklist and, eventually, to exclude unwanted visitors. Among the first on the list were Morton Grodzins and Bob Spencer from the University of California, both of the JERS project staff.[396] The cause for their blacklisting was a trifle: when Kikuchi passed to Grodzins a folder with bulletins and diary notes, the supervisor of the Service Division, George Greene, stepped in and told them that the study was not authorized and that no written material could go about the camp. Asked whether he intended to censor the mail, Greene replied "Absolutely not! We are only acting for

386 *Letter*, Tom Shibutani to Virginia Galbraith, May 4, 1942, JERS: 18:247.
387 Modell (ed.): *Kikuchi Diary*, p. 59.
388 Ibid., p. 127.
389 *The Internal Police*, Earle Yusa, JERS: 16:499-500.
390 *First Month,* Shibutani, Najima, Shibutani, p. 44, JERS: 16:415.
391 Modell (ed.): *Kikuchi Diary*, p. 157.
392 Ibid., p. 215.
393 *Minutes of House Managers' Meeting*, June 10, 1942, JERS: 14:483-484; *Diary*, anonymous, p. 15, June 22, 1942, JERS: 16:182.
394 *Diary*, B., p. 72, August 7, 1942, JERS: 16:212.
395 Modell (ed.): *Kikuchi Diary*, p. 157
396 Morton Grodzins later wrote *Americans Betrayed: Politics and the Japanese Evacuation* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1949). Another blacklisted was Helen Gahagan Douglas, the above-mentioned politician.

the best interest of the people and if the wrong information gets out, it will hurt them."[397] Grodzins reassured Greene that nothing secret was done and that officials in charge had approved the study. Nevertheless, after this incident the administration put the JERS staff, including Dr. Thomas, on the blacklist. Kikuchi vented his anger in his diary:

> Greene acted as if a crime has been done. There are no such things as freedom of the press or speech around here. Everything has to have the "approval" of the Administration. I realize that they have a heavy responsibility, but why can't they start from the assumption that we are average Americans and give us a decent chance instead of being suspicious about everything we do.[398]

On August 11, the Army allowed Dr. Thomas and Morton Grodzins to enter the camp again, but from then on the Internal Police supervised all meetings, and any papers passed were inspected.[399]

On August 8, following an Army directive, the administration once more tightened security:

> From today, the ruling about the division of visitors and residents went into effect. There were mess tables spread the length of the hall [to separate visitors and evacuees]. Moreover, there were internal police and J[apanese] guards roaming in the hall regularly to make sure that no one passed any contraband over the table. The visitors were again delayed and asked the many questions, so had to wait for ¾ of an hour. Moreover, they brought some food, and the guards took it without telling them that it wouldn't be delivered, which made the residents very bitter […].[400]

No vegetables, staple food products or perishable products brought by visitors were allowed, with the exception of fresh citrus or deciduous seasonal fruits such as apples, oranges, lemons and plums, supposedly because of the persistent vitamin deficiency in mess hall food.[401] The new prison-like setup forced even the positive-minded evacuees to acknowledge the disconcerting reality. As Doris Hayashi noted:

> I was feeling very dejected because the regulation that the visitors must sit on one side of the table while we sit on the other […]. It reminded me of a prison. On top of all this, there was the abolition of council and congress this week, which made me feel bluer yet. I really was in no mood for visitors but I did have one. The chairman of race relations groups at the YWCA. She came with a number of the YWCA fellows and we "wept on their shoulders" telling them all of our problems and the new regulations.[402]

Observing how the inmates reacted to the new setup, a JERS researcher noted that three out of four evacuees were "pretty burned up." People asked: "What the hell they think we are, a bunch of prisoners?" "What kind of prison is this?" "All they need is to put a screen in now."[403] Evidently, the administration had crossed an invisible line. Sensing the growth of a rebellious mood, one week later the director of Tanforan had the prison setup abolished and returned to a more informal arrangement, which allowed visitors and evacuees to mingle, though under the constant watch of their guards.

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397 Modell (ed.): *Kikuchi Diary*, p. 208.
398 Ibid., pp. 208-209. Kikuchi tried to get back the confiscated material from the George Greene, but to no avail. See ibid., pp. 212-213.
399 Ibid., p. 219.
400 *Diary*, B., p. 73, August 8, 1942, JERS: 16:212.
401 *Tanforan Totalizer,* Issue 15, August 15, 1942, p. 1.
402 *Diary*, Doris Hayashi, p. 223, August 8, 1942, JERS: 17:203.
403 Modell (ed.): *Kikuchi Diary*, pp. 209-210, 215.

Restrictions pertaining to incoming goods and visitor passes remained and were strictly enforced.[404]

Visiting policy is a fine example for the predicament the camp administration faced. On one hand, they wanted to monitor the inmates as closely as possible, fearing that leniency and diffidence would make the incarcerated too self-confident. On the other side, whenever the administration cut down on the little freedom that was left, there was the danger that the evacuees would revolt. In several instances – be it the dismissal of incompetent staff, the improvement of the sanitary and housing situation, or the visitor regulations – they revolted with success. Draconian rules, rarely imposed, were almost never enforced: On May 21, for example, the Internal Police ruled that stealing lumber would lead to two years' imprisonment or a fine of $2,000. Still the evacuees continued to snatch away lumber under their guard's noses, and nobody was held responsible.[405]

To placate the evacuees the administration even disregarded Army orders, such as the curfew. While the WCCA ruled that from 10:00 p.m. to 6:00 a.m. "all evacuees shall be in their living quarters,"[406] the Internal Police chief at Tanforan, Jerry Easterbrooks, convinced Frank Davis not to enforce a curfew "unless necessary."[407] In a meeting with the Advisory Council, Davis confided to the evacuee councilmen: "I'm not in favor of a curfew. You fellows could handle the internal problem. I don't think it's necessary."[408] In fact, the administration did not have the means to manage internal security without the help of evacuees: There were only four Caucasian policemen to each 1,000 detainees, leaving the wardens no choice but to cooperate with the inmates.[409]

The evacuees took considerable pride in the fact that there was no curfew in Tanforan. Doris Hayashi noted in her diary: "It seems that this is the only camp without curfew. [Our radios need to be] off at 9, but I believe it is coast-wide, not only our camp. We don't have to shut off lights at a certain time."[410] It was common that evacuees compared Tanforan with other camps – often believing the wildest rumors about them – to assure themselves of their extraordinary (i.e. fortunate) situation.[411] The bottom line was always the same: Their situation was bad, but there were others who were worse off.

On August 15, the Army officially declared that Assembly Centers could decide individually whether a curfew was necessary or not.[412] As mentioned, Tanforan's administrators saw no need for it. The only restriction was that lights had to be turned out at 10:30 p.m., as mandated in a bulletin from

404 Ibid., p. 225; Okubo: *Citizen 13660*, p. 57.
405 *Minutes of the House Managers' Meeting*, May 21, 1942, JERS: 14:460; Okubo: *Citizen 13660*, p. 50.
406 WCCA: *Concentration Camp U.S.A. Regulations*, p. 12 (WCCA: *Operation Manual*, Section XXXV).
407 Modell (ed.): *Kikuchi Diary*, p. 189. There were six police chiefs during Tanforan's brief existence. Jerry Easterbrooks was the second chief and genuinely popular among the evacuees. He was in charge from June 1 to June 26, when the administration replaced him, presumably for his lenient attitude towards the evacuees. Yet neither of his successors introduced a curfew. See Ibid., pp. 98-99, 151; *Minutes of the Executive Council*, July 17, 1942, JERS: 14:406.
408 *Protocol, Advisory Council Meeting*, June 19, 1942, JERS: 14:380.
409 *Minutes of the House Managers' Meeting*, June 27, 1942, JERS: 14:501; Sandra C. Taylor: *Jewel of the Desert: Japanese American Internment at Topaz*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993, p. 70.
410 *Diary*, Doris Hayashi, p. 35, June 6, 1942, JERS: 17:106.
411 *Diary*, Doris Hayashi, p. 100, June 29, 1942, JERS: 17:140.
412 *Center Regulations (Supplement No. 1)*, WCCA, JERS: 12:323.

July 27.[413] The absence of a curfew allowed for nightly activities and led to constant debates between parents and children as to when they should be home at night.[414] After a thirteen-year-old girl became pregnant, church groups and Issei parents actually petitioned the administration to introduce a curfew.[415]

Although the camp administration waived application of a curfew and let the evacuees do the roll call themselves, the Internal Police was still present twenty-four hours a day, reminding the evacuees that they were under surveillance.[416] Four men were on patrol at any one time, and every point in the camp was covered every half hour. The Issei were content with this regulation as long as the Caucasian officers did not talk to their wives. The Nisei objected to it, claiming that they could handle the situation themselves.[417]

Besides maintaining order within the compound, the Internal Police had to ensure that no contraband would enter Tanforan.[418] In order to achieve this, they checked all visitors and incoming parcels. In addition, the Internal Police were "authorized, without warrant, to enter all buildings and evacuee quarters at any time of the day or night."[419] Though this privilege was rarely exercised, the evacuees naturally detested it and protested in several instances.[420]

This privilege also allowed Tanforan's keepers to conduct two camp-wide searches. The first search, conducted by the Internal Police, happened on June 22 and June 23 by order of the WCCA headquarters in San Francisco, which suspected that contraband had been smuggled in at the induction.[421] Contraband included Japanese literature, curved handsaws, kitchen knives, rubbing alcohol, large scissors, baseball bats, short-wave radios, flashlights beyond a certain power and a few other articles.[422] Some inmates promptly hid their knives, tools and valued books upon learning about the search.[423] The evacuee Advisory Council urged the camp director to let the Issei keep at least translations of Western fiction, but Davis remained adamant. Thus, a translated Victor Hugo, if found, was confiscated as contraband.[424] Many Nisei empathized with their parents who had "nothing left to read, except their bibles and religious books."[425]

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413 *Diary*, anonymous, p. 59, July 27, 1942, JERS: 16:205.
414 *Diary*, B., p. 9, June 14, 1942, JERS: 16:179; *Diary*, Ben Iijima, July 8, 1942, JERS: 17:412.
415 Modell (ed.): *Kikuchi Diary*, p. 196.
416 The Internal (sometimes "Interior") Police were civilian policemen who operated within the compound, while the uniformed Military Police patrolled the border fences. See U.S. Army: *Final Report*, pp. 215-218.
417 *First Month,* Shibutani, Najima, Shibutani, p. 22, JERS: 16:404.
418 *Administrative Bulletin No. 1*, May 7, 1942, in *First Month,* Shibutani, Najima, Shibutani, p. 21, JERS: 16:404. For a summary of the tasks of the Internal and Military Police see *Memorandum: Functions of the Military Police Units at Centers for Japanese Evacuees*, WCCA, JERS: 12:131-132.
419 *Center Regulations*, WCCA, JERS: 12:324; *Memorandum: Functions of the Military Police Units at Centers for Japanese Evacuees*, WCCA, JERS: 12:132.
420 Complaint no. 83, for example, states that a Caucasian patrolman walked in "six times without knocking on the suspicion that gambling was going on." Modell (ed.): *Kikuchi Diary*, p. 196.
421 Okubo: *Citizen 13660*, p. 108.
422 WCCA: *Concentration Camp U.S.A. Regulations*, pp. 3-4 (WCCA: *Operation Manual*, Section XVII).
423 Modell (ed.): *Kikuchi Diary*, p. 145.
424 *Minutes of the Advisory Council*, June 22, 1942, JERS: 14:382.
425 Modell (ed.): *Kikuchi Diary*, p. 146.

The search was conducted with varying degrees of thoroughness as the following account illustrates:

> The [officer] who happened to come [to our family] was very friendly and felt sorry that he was compelled to make searches – he merely asked if there was any contraband, and then chatted with [my] mother and father in a very friendly manner. With this attitude, [my] family didn't feel cynical at all. […] The only Japanese matter [in our home] was a dictionary, but the inspector said that wasn't contraband. Some of the other areas were not as fortunate for the inspectors concerned searched the house thoroughly, even under the mattress, etc., taking small scissors, toy saws, even dictionaries and Bibles, saying they couldn't tell if it were a Bible or not."[426]

Towards the end, an evacuee noted, the inspectors "mainly knocked and asked if there were any contraband articles in the stable."[427]

The second search, on September 5, was conducted under Army supervision and was more thorough.[428] With the transfer to inland Relocation Camps approaching, the WCCA wanted to ensure that no contraband would be smuggled to the WRA camps. The camp was divided into several sections. Then a cordon of soldiers sealed each section and nobody could leave or enter the area for the duration of the search. Each inspection team comprised two soldiers and one evacuee from the Internal Police who usually did the search. While a majority seemed to be "rather disgusted" with the whole procedure,[429] Ben Iijima took it easy:

> The first thing the man did was to look thru the hymnal on the table, then he looked thru the trunk which I've got filled with books. "School books, huh?" he said. Yep, I told him. Then he went into the back stall, and lifted up a heavy book, "Emily Post," he said, "Too deep for me." Then he went quickly thru the trunks. […] When the internal policeman returned, he asked me a few questions just before he left. Have you phonograph records? A phonograph? Books in Japanese print? Then he asked if there was any alcohol. I told him we had rubbing alcohol. "You can drink that," he said laughingly and the both left. It was all very quickly done.[430]

Having hitherto provided the perspective of the inmates, I will now consider briefly the viewpoint of the authorities. Thus far I demonstrated that the administration interpreted the Army's regulations leniently, avoided being too intrusive, and adopted a benevolent attitude. Moreover, both the administration and the Army repeatedly emphasized the "Normalcy" of incarceration. The following announcement, which was read to the house managers by a representative of the WCCA headquarters, is a fine example of official rhetoric. It is worth quoting in full because it explains from the Army's perspective how evacuees ought to cope with life in bondage:

> We recognize the hardships that have been placed upon you people and have tried to make things as pleasant as possible. We also recognize the fact that among Japanese people the large majority are 100% American citizens, and yet as you all realize that some of you are not. This is true of any race. Therefore, good or bad, this policing problem is something that has to be worked out. I want you people to understand that the situation here is exactly the same as on the outside, that is, our officers are acting in the same capacity as the patrolmen where you lived. You are to call the police officer at any time and tell them what is wrong; that is what we

426 *Diary*, anonymous, p. 15, June 22, 1942, JERS: 16:182.
427 Modell (ed.): *Kikuchi Diary*, p. 146.
428 Okubo: *Citizen 13660*, p. 108; *Diary*, anonymous, pp. 104-105, September 4-5, 1942, JERS: 16:228-229.
429 *Diary*, anonymous, p. 105, September 5, 1942, JERS: 16:229; Uchida: *Desert Exile*, pp. 98-99.
430 *Diary*, Ben Iijima, September 5, 1942, JERS: 17:495.

> want to hear. We want the cooperation of the people if we are to achieve any degree of success. There are 4 men to each 1,000 people. If you have a problem you want to get cleared up through the police, come to them, no injustice will be done. […] However, you will have to realize you will have to abide by the same law as on the outside. […] Get this over to the people […].[431]

The speech begins with the assurance of sympathy and goes on to appeal to the pragmatism of the inmates: "[G]ood or bad, this policing problem is something to be worked out." The Army seeks to cajole the evacuees into cooperation, yet it fails to resolve the exceptional character, the unlawfulness, of the incarceration. It falsely states that the evacuees had to "abide by the same law as in the outside." And while admitting that "the large majority are 100% American citizens," which "is true of any race," the speech omits the logical conclusion, that there was no more reason to concentrate Japanese Americans without due process of law, than, say, German Americans.

Finally, this document aptly illustrates the Army's attitude vis-à-vis the evacuees; mild authoritarianism mixed with a good dose of paternalism. The evacuees' records confirm the prevailing paternalistic attitude. In particular camp director Frank Davis and George Greene, head of the Service Division, repeatedly stated that the incarceration was only in the best interest of the evacuees. Very few, like Frank Kilpatrick, the director of the education program, and the previously mentioned chief of police, Jerry Easterbrooks, treated the Nisei as equal, full-fledged Americans, not as "young punks just out of college […]."[432]

To sum up, then, the inmates – consciously or half-consciously – daily faced the disconcerting truth of being incarcerated under prison-like conditions. We have seen that they developed various strategies to face a reality they naturally felt as an insult: They cooperated to make administration less intrusive. They tried to get as much self-determination as possible in matters of policing. And if regulations became too oppressive they voiced their discontent, sometimes even compelling the administration to revoke their measures. That the inmates managed to assert a certain level of freedom and autonomy is remarkable because technically the Army had total power over them. But since the Army wanted to uphold the impression of a benevolent rule, it could not fully exert its power.

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431 *Minutes of the House Managers' Meeting*, June 27, 1942, JERS: 14:501.
432 George Greene to Ben Iijima. As cited in *Diary*, Ben Iijima, August 5, 1942, JERS: 17:449.

6 – Life Behind Barbed Wire

For months have passed
And at last I learn
To call this horse stall
My family's home.

– Yukari Uchida[433]

Nothing has occurred yet, but this does not mean that nothing will happen. Discontent is seething under the surface and something is bound to happen before long.

– Tamotsu Shibutani[434]

The previous chapters demonstrated that never during its existence was Tanforan a normal community. Yet while Tanforan featured all the characteristics of a concentration camp, everyday life was ambiguous and there were many semblances of normality. Once the evacuees had eliminated the worst discomforts and transformed Tanforan into a halfway livable habitat, they turned to the spiritual and intellectual needs of the incarcerated people. The present chapter, therefore, examines education, recreation, and religion in Tanforan. In other words, I will pursue the question what people did in their spare time.

The main part of this chapter outlines how the inmates organized these activities on their own initiative. While the main purpose was to bolster their morale, these activities have also deeper implications, allowing us to take up discourses from preceding chapters: We will continue to track the development of the community spirit, further investigate the changing attitudes regarding cooperation and resistance, and explore by which means the administration tried to control the inmates. However, before we begin our examination we need to take a brief look at Tanforan's administrative setup, more specifically the employment situation, which provides the institutional frame for the following observations and offers initial illuminating insights into the above discourses.

Tanforan's administrative setup was clear-cut: Civilian personnel – procured mainly by the Work Projects Administration (WPA), but also by hospitals, schools, and the police – administered the camp while soldiers of the U.S. Army guarded the compound.[435] Tanforan's administration was divided into five divisions: (1) The "Administrative Division" acted as liaison to the WCCA headquarters in San Francisco which prescribed the basic regulations for all Assembly Centers. Heading the division was first camp director William Lawson, who was succeeded in June by Frank Davis.[436] The camp director

433 Yoshiko Uchida: *Desert Exile. The Uprooting of a Japanese American Family*, Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1982, p. 83.
434 *The First Month at Tanforan. A Preliminary Report*, Tamotsu Shibutani, Haruo Najima, Tomiko Shibutani, p. 77, JERS: 16:432.
435 Responsibility for all Assembly Centers was with the Wartime Civil Control Administration (WCCA), a branch of the U.S. Army. See U.S. Army, Western Defense Command and Fourth Army: *Final Report: Japanese Evacuation from the West Coast, 1942*, Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1943, pp. 222-223, 344-345.
436 The Army used the term "director" in its documents, while within Tanforan both evacuees and administrators preferred

was responsible for communication within the camp and for its orderly conduct. He employed a small staff of Caucasian and Nisei stenographers and receptionists. (2) The "Works and Maintenance Division" maintained all physical facilities of the camp, from repairs to electric, water and sewer system, to buildings and mess hall tables. (3) The "Mess and Lodging Division" was responsible for housing and feeding, as well as policing, cleaning and furnishing supplies for laundries, showers and latrines. Like all divisions it was headed by a Caucasian while the actual work was done by Japanese-American employees. (4) The "Finance and Record Division" kept all accounts and records. (5) The "Service Division" was the one with the closest contacts to the evacuees. It headed the recreation and education program, supervised employment and was responsible for issuing paychecks and scrip books.[437]

As indicated above, the Army determined "to employ evacuees […] to the fullest extent practicable."[438] The WCCA expected several advantages from this policy. First of all, it decreased the costs of running the camps. Second, by keeping evacuees busy the Army hoped to dissuade them from pondering their situation and having second thoughts about their compliant attitude. Thirdly, it was hoped that work would raise the evacuees' self-esteem and make Assembly Centers look more like self-sustaining communes than concentration camps, in short, more respectable. We will see later in this chapter to what degree these goals were achieved.

In practice, Japanese Americans, both U.S. citizens and aliens, ran the camp. In some departments an evacuee foreman took over and the Caucasian chief was only chief in name.[439] But in most cases there was a clear division between Caucasian supervisors and evacuee staff. In some divisions conflicts were the order of the day, such as in the employment department. It's chief, Mr. Gunder, was notorious for losing his temper and threatening to send disobedient staff into a concentration camp.[440] While his paradoxical announcements typically failed to impress his employees, his choleric temper earned him nicknames such as "Mr. Thunder" or "Mr. Blunder."[441] Observed his secretary:

> Mr. Gunder was talking to someone about the insolence of one of the workers who talked back to the officials. He is always harping on the insubordination of the Nisei here. He emphasizes the position of officials as true superiors to the inhabitants of the camp – almost to the military extreme. It is really aggravating to hear such talk.[442]

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the term "manager."

437 *First Month*, Shibutani, Najima, Shibutani: pp. 7-17, JERS: 16:397-402; U.S. Army: *Final Report*, pp. 223-224. Starting in June evacuees were given monthly allowances in coupons to purchase basic necessities such as clothing. Also, community services such as the center store, shoe repair shop and barber shop were only obtainable in exchange for coupons. The monthly coupon allowance was $1.00 for evacuees under 16, $2.50 for evacuees over 16, $4.50 for married couples, and a maximum of $7.50 for families. See Wartime Civil Control Administration: *Concentration Camp U.S.A. Regulations. July 18, 1942*, San Mateo: Japanese American Curriculum Project, 1973, p. 5 (WCCA: *Operation Manual*, Section XX).

438 U.S. Army: *Final Report*, p. 222.

439 *First Month*, Shibutani, Najima, Shibutani: p. 7, JERS: 16:397.

440 Gunder himself was a second-generation German American. See *Diary*, Doris Hayashi, p. 84, June 23, 1942, JERS: 17:132.

441 *Tanforan Personnel*, JERS: 16:489.

442 *Diary*, Doris Hayashi, p. 149, July 10, 1942, JERS: 17:164.

By contrast, evacuees were full of praise for police chief Jerry Easterbrooks, because, as Charles Kikuchi put it, "he understands […] that most Nisei are just like him, and he won't allow his men to spy or put on a superior attitude while in camp."[443] Likewise, chief steward John Fogarty was popular because he "took a very genuine interest in the welfare of the residents."[444] Despite occasional clashes, Caucasian staff and evacuee employees cooperated efficiently, not at least because the camp director disbanded incompetent staff or those who misbehaved grossly, such as the head of the receiving department who was dismissed after he had been caught drunk on the premises.[445]

The evacuees, then, were not *per se* opposed to authority. They only opposed what Erich Fromm called "irrational authority," because irrational authority works against the interest of its subjects (a typical example of irrational authority would be the master's attitude to his slave). Applied to Tanforan this explains why incompetent administrators and those whose sole interest was to enforce Army directives frequently came into conflict with the inmates. Incompetent staff were of little help for the incarcerated when it came to improve living standards, and narrow-minded bureaucrats refused to grant more autonomy to the inmates than absolutely necessary. Yet these were the main goals of the prison community. The interest of a "rational authority," in contrast, lies in the same direction as that of his subjects. The chief of the Internal Police, Easterbrooks, for instance, sought to guarantee the incarcerated the largest possible degree of autonomy which was in their own interest. He was an authority that the inmates could accept without submitting.[446]

Apart from varying relations to individual supervisors, evacuees frequently made generalizations about the administration, which were almost always negative. The administration was not only held responsible for all the mishaps they caused but it became the scapegoat for injustices that lay far beyond its power to influence. While the incompetence and arrogance of individual supervisors was reason enough to trigger the evacuees' scorn, its harshness can only be explained by the underlying frustration caused by their confinement, with its consequential humiliation and deprivation. In their personal records the inmates constantly demonize the administration as "the main source of evil"[447] and ridicule them as "third-rate W.P.A. men"[448] although even the most able administrators could not have changed the Spartan setup that the Army provisioned. Unfair as some of these accusations were, the *idea* of an arbitrary and incompetent administration was an important means to cope with the shameful experience of incarceration; further, it welded the victims together and served as an important outlet to vent their frustration.

By June 1 1,767 evacuees were employed, and the number went up to almost 2,500 by the end

443 John Modell (ed.): *The Kikuchi Diary. Chronicle from an American Concentration Camp: The Tanforan Journals of Charles Kikuchi*, Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1973, pp. 98-99.
444 *Tanforan Personnel*, JERS: 16:488.
445 *Tanforan Personnel*, JERS: 16:489; *Administrative Personalities*, pp. 9-14, JERS: 16:332-335.
446 See Erich Fromm: *On Disobedience and Other Essays*, New York: The Seabury Press, 1981, pp. 19-20.
447 *Letter*, Tom Shibutani to Dr. Thomas, May 11, JERS: 18:249; *Administrative Personalities*, pp. 9-14, JERS: 16:332-335.
448 *First Month*, Shibutani, Najima, Shibutani, p. 80, JERS: 16:433.

of August.[449] Persons assigned to jobs worked on a 44-hour per week basis and were classified as unskilled, skilled or professional at monthly wage rates of $8, $12, and $16 respectively (equaling about 15 percent of the average American salary).[450] No evacuee was required to work, but once he accepted a job, he was expected to carry it out except in case of illness. To quit, a 48-hour notice of intent was required.[451] While in Tanforan there was never a scarcity of people willing to work, there were plenty of cases when evacuees returned to the employment office to "throw back the work sheets."[452]

Notwithstanding recurring frictions between Caucasian supervisors and evacuee employees, the inmates never dodged work if they saw that it benefited their community. This has been illustrated in chapters 3 and 4, in the example of dishwashers and cooks, nurses and doctors, as well as house managers. The same went for those employees who worked for the intellectual and spiritual welfare of their fellow detainees, in education, recreation, and religion. Because the Army had devised Assembly Centers solely for the "maintenance" of the evacuees, it provided "no formal system of education or recreation."[453] Nevertheless, due to the inmates' initiative and outside support from private organizations, schools, and churches, a comprehensive program for education and recreation sprung up in Tanforan, receiving due commendation for its exemplary character in the Army's *Final Report*.[454]

The education program was divided into three branches: academic (kindergarten, elementary school, high school, and adult education), cultural (art, music, flower arranging), and extra-curricular (cooperative education, first aid, town hall debates). In the absence of a formal education program, resident teachers staffed all schools.[455] By the end of June, about 40 percent of all inmates either taught or attended classes (see Table 10).[456] The educational department was headed by Frank Kilpatrick, a graduate of Berkeley's Boalt Hall law school. A district supervisor of education of Alameda and Contra Costa County, his personal experience with Japanese Americans came from four years of teaching at the Berkeley evening high school, a period that had left him with a highly favorable

449 *Tanforan Totalizer*, Issue 5, June 13, 1942, p. 2. For the period from April 28 to May 21 1,771 evacuees received a total of $6,817 (Issue 9, July 11, 1942, p. 1); from May 22 to June 21 2,013 persons were employed (1337 unskilled, 502 skilled, 174 professional), receiving $16,200 (Issue 9, July 11, 1942, p. 1); from June 22 to July 21 the number rose to 2,370 (1,144 unskilled, 951 skilled, 275 professional), receiving $21,000; 2,427 workers were on the fourth payroll for the period from July 22 to August 21, earning over $21,000 (Issue 17, August 29, 1942 p. 1); U.S. Army: *Final Report*, p. 205. In addition, an unknown number of people pitched in to help without any compensation.
450 See Dorothy S. Thomas, Richard S. Nishimoto: *The Spoilage*, Berkeley: University of California Press, [2]1969, pp. 33-34. The average wage in the United States at that time was $1,300 a year, or about $108 a month.
451 Wartime Civil Control Administration: *Concentration Camp U.S.A. Regulations. July 18, 1942*, San Mateo: Japanese American Curriculum Project, 1973, pp. 5-6 (WCCA: *Operation Manual*, Section XXI).
452 A Nisei secretary noted that "Mr. Gunder is very abrupt with such people," but there was nothing the employment office could do in such cases but to recruit another volunteer. *Diary*, Doris Hayashi, p. 5, May 13, 1942, JERS: 17:090.
453 U.S. Army: *Final Report*, p. 207. On the education policy in Relocation Camps see Thomas James' *Exile Within: The Schooling of Japanese Americans, 1942-1945*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1987.
454 U.S. Army: *Final Report*, pp. 208-209.
455 *Tanforan Totalizer*, Issue 4, June 6, 1942, p. 3.
456 Uchida: *Desert Exile*, p. 90; *Tanforan Totalizer*, Issue 19, September 12, 1942.

opinion of the Nisei.[457]

Let us start our synopsis of the education program by looking at the setup of the elementary and high school. Since the evacuation forced the students to interrupt school before the end of the school year, the most pressing need was to advance them to the next grade. 90 percent of the pupils achieved this goal.[458] As the efforts under which this was achieved are far more telling than the numbers denoting its success, we shall dwell awhile on its implementation.

Registration, which was voluntary, started on Monday, May 25. Already on that day 75 percent of the approximately 1,700 students between the ages of six and eighteen registered, approaching 100 percent within days. The next day four classes for children between the ages of six through eight were begun at four unused mess halls.[459] The furnishing was provisional. Blackboards were made from painted plywood. The mess hall benches and tables were far too high for the children and there were virtually no supplies. However, three-fourths of the children brought their own pencils, pads, school records and textbooks, and due to supplies from schools outside, only a lack of textbooks remained. Notwithstanding makeshift conditions, the Nisei director of the elementary school proudly noted the patriotism and good-will of the children:

> Children could sing *God Bless America*, *Star-Spangled Banner*, and *America* better than *Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star,* [and] the willingness to participate in volunteer activities, like leading songs, was much greater than expected.[460]

High school classes started on June 15 with about 700 students registered. Classes continued for thirteen full weeks until September 11. The high school was staffed with twenty teachers, all with college degree but only three with previous teaching experience. The largest problem for the high school proved to be the venue. After the bachelors had been moved out of the grandstand, the former dormitory was turned into the high school.[461] As its director put it, "where formerly horse-race fans did their betting and drinking while they watched the results being posted on the board, school soon was under way."[462] Charles Kikuchi, too, was struck by the bizarre setting:

> A painted sign "Tanforan High School" sticks up from the mutual windows and a girl stands behind it giving out information instead of selling mutual racing tickets. The unerased race results high in the air lend a further racing touch.[463]

Eighty mess-tables, seating eight at each table, lined up in groups of eight. Classes were from 8-12 every weekday and consisted of five periods, each forty-five minutes.[464] The result of teaching ten classes simultaneously in one big hall without partitions can be easily imagined. There was a vast hubbub of voices, occasionally derailing into a pandemonium.[465] A loud laugh disturbed all ten classes

457 *Tanforan Totalizer*, Issue 8, July 4, 1942, p. 5; *Administrative Personalities*, anonymous, p. 14, JERS: 16:335.
458 Uchida: *Desert Exile*, p. 90; *Tanforan Totalizer*, Issue 19, September 12, 1942.
459 *The Informal Elementary Education Program at Tanforan*, E. Takahashi, p. 5, JERS: 14:323.
460 Ibid., pp. 5-7, JERS: 14:323-324. For typical class schedules see Appendix II.
461 Uchida: *Desert Exile*, p. 89.
462 *The Tanforan High School*, Henry Tani, p. 3, JERS: 16:437.
463 Modell (ed.): *Kikuchi Diary*, p. 134.
464 *The Tanforan High School*, Henry Tani, pp. 1-3, JERS: 16:436-437.
465 Modell (ed.): *Kikuchi Diary*, pp. 134-135.

in session. The students complained that the smell of food distracted them (the kitchen was just underneath), whereas the cooks in the kitchen complained about the dust that came through the ceiling "because the kids run all over the place up here."[466] The teachers, most of whom had just graduated from university and lacked teaching experience, coped with varying degrees of success. Henry Tani, director of the high school, noted that the lack of discipline was a serious problem because "a Nisei as a teacher was an unknown thing."[467] Many teachers had younger siblings in their classes. While some had difficulties controlling unruly students, others managed the situation by adopting unconventional measures: One teacher taught standing on the table, from where she commanded the attention not only of her own class but also that of neighboring classes.[468] Despite these difficulties, Frank Kilpatrick concluded that, "a feeling of accomplishment prevails, due to the cooperation and earnest endeavor of all concerned."[469]

In addition to elementary school and high school, several nursery schools were created for children aged two to five. The first kindergarten opened on May 18, and three more soon followed. Out of 372 children in pre-school age, 287 registered.[470] Opened from Monday through Saturday 9:00 to 11:30 a.m., the kindergarten took over the task "to free the mother without taking her place," as the *Totalizer* advertised.[471] Again the physical setup was marked by inadequacies: Initially there were no chairs, tables, toys, towels, dishes or toilets.[472] A nursery teacher remembered: "The first few days […] were sheer bedlam. Nearly all twenty children present were crying, some lost their breakfast, some wet their pants, and others ran into the yard screaming for their mamas."[473] Young children were quick to change the concept of home:

> Whenever the children played house, they always stood in line to eat at make-believe mess halls rather than cooking and setting tables as they would have done at home.[474]

Due to support from Mills College, the Oakland Federal Emergency Nursery School, the Fellowship of Reconciliation and other organizations, the nursery schools greatly improved their services and soon enjoyed the confidence of many mothers.[475]

The college-aged Nisei had the most difficulties to carry on with their education. To get them back to school, a group of Californian educators, most prominently Robert Gordon Sproul, president of the University of California, mounted the first successful program that provided exemptions to the policy of mass exclusion. Working closely with the National Student Relocation Council (NSRC) Robert Sproul eventually convinced the War Department that the continuation of higher education was

466 *Diary*, Ben Iiyima, June 16, 1942, JERS: 17:376.
467 *The Tanforan High School*, Henry Tani, p. 20, JERS: 16:446.
468 Modell (ed.): *Kikuchi Diary*, p. 135.
469 *Education Report*, Frank E. Kilpatrick, July 1, 1942, JERS: 14:277.
470 *The Pre-School Program at Tanforan*, Kay Uchida, Grace Fujii, JERS: 16:470.
471 *Tanforan Totalizer,* Issue 3, May 30, 1942, p. 5.
472 *The Pre-School Program at Tanforan*, Kay Uchida, Grace Fujii, JERS: 16:462-464.
473 Uchida: *Desert Exile*, p. 88.
474 Ibid., p. 88.
475 *The Pre-School Program at Tanforan*, Kay Uchida, Grace Fujii, JERS: 16:462.

a desirable step. On May 18, Roosevelt promised that Nisei students would be able to continue their education in inland institutions. Until the end of the war, some 4,300 students left Assembly Centers and Relocation Camps to attend college.[476]

In Tanforan there were an estimated 250 college graduates and 250 college students.[477] Because the NSRC's program was still in its beginnings only about ten students left Tanforan to continue higher education outside the Western Defense Command.[478] Nativist protests forced at least two Nisei to return to Tanforan.[479] In addition, three Kibei volunteered to go to the University of Colorado, at Boulder, to teach Japanese to Navy men, looking forward to "return to civilization," as one of them put it.[480]

Complementing nursery school, elementary school, and high school classes, a program for adults was set up, including Americanization classes in English, civics, and history. During the first week over 225 Issei and Kibei signed in for English classes scheduled twice a week, and eventually some 500 participated. Classes were limited to ten students each, stress being on English conversation. The *Totalizer* wrote on the adult education program:

> Students are learning songs like "Old Black Joe" and "Long, Long Ago." Being presented also are simplified condensation of American historical events such as the signing of the Declaration of Independence and Paul Revere's ride. The lives of outstanding men in U.S. history, like Benjamin Franklin and Abraham Lincoln, are being studied.[481]

Americanization classes were counterbalanced with flower arranging (*ikebana*) and paper folding (*origami*) classes that allowed the residents to practice traditional Japanese arts.[482] In addition, Professor Chiura Obata from the University of California gave weekly lectures on the fine arts which

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476 Roger Daniels: *Concentration Camps: North America. Japanese in the United States and Canada during World War II*, Malabar: Krieger Publishing Company, [4]1993, pp. 97-101. The issue has been well-researched, resulting in three major treatments: National Japanese American Student Relocation Council: *From Camp to College: The Story of Japanese American Student Relocation*, Philadelphia: NSRC, 1945; Gary Y. Okihiro: *Storied Lives: Japanese American Students and World War II*, Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1999; Allan W. Austin: *From Concentration Camp to Campus: Japanese American Students and World War II*, Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2004.

477 *Diary*, Doris Hayashi, p. 121, July 3, 1942, JERS: 17:150.

478 Among the reasons why so few Nisei left, were filial piety, reports of hostilities at the host institution, lack of funds and the Army's reluctance to offer support. Colonel Bendetsen played a key role on boycotting the NRSC's efforts. For example, he required that a member of the military police was to be present during interviews with the NSRC. Even the Assistant Secretary of War was not "very keen about the instruction" but Bendetsen insisted that it was necessary: "The point is we just don't trust them." Bendetsen added that, "our Public Relations has been very good because we have been very watchful. That's the only reason that they have been good." Lastly, Bendetsen believed that education was not the Army's business. When his War Department liaison in Washington D.C. pointed out, that "the Army has the Japs now and we are going to have them until October," (the school season was going to start in September) Bendetsen remained unmoved. In the end, the WCCA successfully dodged the issue and college students in Tanforan had to wait until they got into the WRA camps, where the administration was more willing to assist them. See *Telephone conversation, Colonel Bendetsen and Colonel Tate (executive officer, office of the Assistance Secretary of War, Washington D.C.)*, July 30, 1942, in Roger Daniels (ed.): *American Concentration Camps: A Documentary History of the Relocation and Incarceration of Japanese Americans, 1942-1945,* New York: Garland, 1989, Vol. 6.

479 A typical example was Kenny Murase who received a scholarship by the Mount Olive Methodist Church to attend college in the city of Dearborn, Michigan. But the City Safety Commission, led by a member of the Veterans of Foreign Wars, mounted a campaign to exclude any offspring of the Japanese. See Modell (ed.): *Kikuchi Diary*, p. 210.

480 *Diary*, Doris Hayashi, p. 102, June 30, 1942, JERS: 17:141.

481 *Tanforan Totalizer*, Issue 15, August 15, 1942, p. 5.

482 Taylor: *Jewel of the Desert*, p. 83.

were hugely popular among all age groups.[483] Most teachers in the adult education program were bilingual and had taught Japanese before the evacuation (adult classes were the only meetings in which Japanese language was allowed).[484] The adult education program was appreciated in particular by Issei women, many of whom for the first time in their lives found the leisure to pursue interests beyond the sphere of family duties. Issei men found it more difficult to enjoy their newly won leisure; many grieved over the loss of their role as provider and detested depending on the federal government.[485]

Apart from the academic program the educational department organized weekly "town hall" discussions. A regular Wednesday night feature, town hall meetings provided the evacuees with a platform to debate various issues related to their current situation. For example, the first town hall meeting, held from 7:30 to 9:00 p.m. on May 27, featured the topic "How may we better cooperate to improve Tanforan." Other topics included "The advisability of marrying in a relocation center," "The role of religion in the relocation center," and "Relocation: stagnation or rehabilitation?"[486] Town hall meetings were organized by Nisei and also chiefly attended by them.

Most topics addressed innocuous issues, most often living conditions and the improvement thereof. Twice, however, the question put forward touched broader issues. One of these questions, posed on June 3, asked what ought to be the "proper attitude" towards the evacuation; this predicament, which had been largely ignored in the general confusion and upheaval of evacuation, was now openly discussed by a majority of the Nisei.[487] It was a controversial topic because it questioned the basic assumption of the evacuation: that it was necessary and justified. Also, it prompted the Nisei to reconsider their nostrum of unconditional submission to Army authorities.

The second question that will concern us is related to the generational gap. It is the question to what extent the Issei, as leaders of the pre-war communities, were to be included in the organization of Tanforan. These two questions address issues the evacuees were genuinely interested in. Moreover, both questions explicate central issues of this study: how did the inmates cope with their captivity, and how did the dominance of the administration affect the generational gap.

Let us begin with the first question, put forward in the second town hall meeting: "What should the Nisei attitude be toward the evacuation?" The various contributions revealed a wide range

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483 *Tanforan Totalizer,* Issue 3, May 30, 1942, p. 3.

484 Army regulations required that all the meetings within the camp had to be conducted in the English language except for cases when Japanese was necessary for the operation of the camp. The use of spoken Japanese language was to be "held to an absolute minimum." Any news publication prepared or issued in the Japanese language was forbidden. Japanese prints of any kind with the exception of approved Japanese religious books and English-Japanese dictionaries were considered contraband. See WCCA: *Concentration Camp U.S.A. Regulations*, p. 14 (WCCA: *Operation Manual*, Section XXXV); *Center Regulations*, WCCA, JERS: 12:090-328; *Tanforan Totalizer*, Issue 8, July 4, 1942, p. 2.

485 *Visit to Tanforan with Dr. Thomas and Mrs. Knight*, anonymous, July 28, 1942, JERS: 16:098; Modell (ed.): *Kikuchi Diary*, p. 139.

486 Each issue of the *Tanforan Totalizer* contained the gist of the week's town hall discussion.

487 As I have explained in chapter 3, the Issei, being enemy aliens, were less preoccupied with their incarceration than their citizen children.

of opinions. The first speaker argued that Japanese Americans were "victims of circumstance" and should accept "the golden mean of voluntary cooperation." He denied the evacuees "free will," and said they had no choice but to comply with everything that the government required them to do. This standpoint, reflecting the JACL's policy of unconditional cooperation and subservience, was echoed by the second speaker, a Protestant minister, who added a religious dimension by pointing out that Christianity was a religion of suffering and forbearance, and that a good Christian should accept the situation and must trust in God.[488]

The three following speakers agreed that the inmates must cooperate, but they varied insofar as they advocated speaking out against pressure groups which they considered the prime cause of their imprisonment. The speakers lent further force to their argument by quoting nativist groups who were seeking to disenfranchise and expropriate the incarcerated Nisei. The last contributor was also the most outspoken. He demanded that although the Nisei were incarcerated they should still stand for free elections and self-determination, proclaiming that "we should fight for what was ours and we would if we really felt like Americans and believed in the democratic principles."[489] Citing from the plethora of racist statements in the Tolan Committee report,[490] he argued that the inmates had few supporters outside, and that the best they could do as American citizens was to keep alive democratic principles within their community.

Far from posing a consensus, this town hall meeting rather expressed the Nisei's growing awareness of their unjust treatment, together with a rising realization that meek compliance was an approach that only encouraged further injustices. These were no sudden insights, but this meeting represented a landmark in a shift in attitude that was to have a lasting effect on the Nisei's stance vis-à-vis their custodians. After spending a month behind barbed wire, reflecting on their situation, more and more Nisei became convinced that they owed their incarceration to persons whose judgment was veiled by fear and prejudice. Seeing that, many Nisei reasoned that they might prove their loyalty best by upholding the principles of freedom and democracy instead of following blindly erroneous authorities. Clearly, nobody intended to overthrow the camp administration, but there was a growing sentiment among the second generation to follow their patents' example and protest to arbitrary treatment, and to demand more self-determination.

Moreover, this town hall meeting illustrates how the administration cut back on freedom of

488 *Diary*, Ben Iijima, June 16, 1942, JERS: 17:369.
489 Modell (ed.): *Kikuchi Diary*, p. 114; *Diary*, Doris Hayashi, p. 28, June 3, 1942, JERS: 17:102.
490 *Diary*, Ben Iiyima, June 16, 1942, JERS: 17:369. In March 1942, this congressional committee, headed by Senator John H. Tolan of California, held hearings in major Pacific Coast cities to investigate whether there was a need for mass evacuation. Although the report did not *make* policy it was important because it endorsed what the military wanted. The Tolan Committee Report demonstrates, maybe better than any other single document, the degree of support that existed for government policies affecting the Japanese Americans, and shows that many felt the government was not doing enough to keep the West Coast safe. See volumes XXIX, XXX and XXXI of the select committee's *Hearings: National Defense Migration* (77th Cong., 2nd session, 1942). Some of the contents of these hearings, plus additional staff research and documentary appendix, are included in the *Fourth Interim Report* of the same committee (House Report 1911, 77th Cong., 2nd session, 1942). Extracts are reprinted in Daniels (ed.): *American Concentration Camps*, vols. 1, 3, 5.

expression when statements critical of evacuation policies were voiced: A column in the weekly camp newspaper, featuring the gist of the town hall discussion, was promptly censored. After the official Army censor had given his consent, George Greene, head of the Service Division, decided that it was "absolutely out." The phrase he objected to ran:

> Dave Tatsuno […] advocated fighting against certain pressure groups that had pushed evacuation, but counseled voluntary cooperation with the Federal program of evacuation.

The item appeared in the *Tanforan Totalizer* of June 6 as follows:

> Dave Tatsuno counseled voluntary cooperation with the Federal program of evacuation.

The other sentence changed was, "Warren Tsuneishi spoke of the forces of fascism and democracy and their relationship to evacuation." This was changed to "Warren Tsuneishi urged continued faith in democracy in meeting the problems of evacuation."[491] Although these were minor changes, they make clear that the administration suppressed anything they deemed even remotely controversial.

Let us now turn to the town hall discussion on the generational gap. The issue was raised during the fifth meeting, on June 24, featuring the topic "Coordinating the interests of the Issei and Nisei for the welfare of the Japanese in America."[492] It was a controversial issue because the administration tended to favor the Nisei; be it self-government, work, or recreation, there were very few opportunities for Issei to take an active part in camp life. The problem was compounded by the fact that some Nisei collaborated with the administration in excluding the Issei from camp life, which further increased frictions within the penned-up community.[493]

The speakers were all second-generation Japanese Americans. Kiyo Nobe opened the meeting with a conciliatory statement: "The one thing needed right now is unity." She explained frictions as a result of lack of understanding due to different upbringing, and due to the lack of time the Issei spent with children: "Under this difficult and strenuous life very little energy was left to become pals to their sons and daughters." A Nisei herself, she posited that some Nisei "formed a misguided view of liberty and freedom" and felt unjustly superior to their parents who were barred from U.S. citizenship by law. She urged the Nisei to respect the age and experience of the Issei: "The Nisei would be wise to include the Issei in all activities and profit by their wisdom." In her conclusion she addressed both generations: the Nisei ought to be more respectful of their parents while the Issei might consider the enforced idleness as an opportunity to spent more time with their children. Finally, she opted to include the Issei in the formation of self-government.[494]

The next speaker, Ernest Iiyama, echoed the call for mutual respect and added a political dimension, arguing that inmates had a democratic obligation to let the parent generation participate in

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491 *Censorship*, Taro Katayama, Charles Kikuchi, et al, pp. 2-3, JERS: 16:453-454.
492 *Tanforan Totalizer*, Issue 7, June 27, 1942.
493 See, for example, Modell (ed.), *Kikuchi Diary*, pp. 72, 116, 119-120, *Diary*, Ben Iijima, June 25, 1942, JERS: 17:386-387, ibid., July 8, 1942, JERS: 17:412, *Diary*, B., July 5, 1942, JERS: 16:189, *First Month*, Shibutani, Najima, Shibutani, p. 39, JERS: 16:413.
494 *Minutes of the Fifth Tanforan Town Hall Meeting*, June 24, 1942, JERS: 16:013.

all aspects of life:

> Rights of all people should be recognized equally. […] In this war, democratic principles are involved. If we are fighting for democratic principles those principles should be used in camp.[495]

Furthermore, Iiyama warned his fellow inmates not to be intimidated by unfavorable outside opinion. He said he knew that some Nisei hoped to "save themselves" by turning against their parents, but this egoism was the wrong answer. He finished by expressing his conviction that the best remedy in these difficult times was to adhere to democratic principles and to show solidarity towards all inmates, regardless of citizenship status.[496]

The final speaker, the Reverend Taro Goto, used the family metaphor and the notion of brotherly love to urge the community to do away with factionalism. In the second part of his speech he gave meaning to the evacuees' situation by suggested that Tanforan was a microcosm of the United States: "These problems we face in assembly centers and relocation centers are not Japanese problems, they are fundamentally American problems," implying that the evacuees needed to defend freedom and democracy against administrative rule, just like the United States defended these values against fascist states. While not everybody might have grasped the implication of Goto's comparison, it is a remarkable statement on its own. Expressing his optimism he concluded that "[w]e are going to build a great America out of this conflagration."[497] The meeting was favorably received. Commented a listener:

> [T]he controversial attitudes expressed throughout the whole evening was a healthy sign. There will be a ban on further use of the Japanese language in any open meetings, so that the Issei feel rather hindered and limited in their freedom. This seems rather unjust to most of us, even the Nisei […].[498]

As mentioned above, the question of Issei participation was discussed not only in this town hall meeting; it was a dominating discourse in camp life, and it remained topical throughout Tanforan's existence. While the issue reappears later in this chapter and is also elaborated in chapter 8, it may be stated tentatively here that these discussions reflect a surge in filial piety and ethnic solidarity, the same trend that post-colonial historians have diagnosed with respect to Relocation Camps. Since filial piety is a seminal trait of Japanese culture, in which the family, not the individual, is the principal unit of society, this tendency clearly has a cultural dimension, too. In short, although most Nisei deliberately distanced themselves from the cultural heritage of their patents, they hesitated to cut the generational ties. On the contrary, captivity made many the second generation realize the value of the family and communal solidarity.

Despite the great efforts put into the education program, there was still plenty of leisure time left to

495 Ibid., JERS: 16:013.
496 Ibid., JERS: 16:013.
497 Ibid., JERS: 16:014.
498 *Diary*, anonymous, p. 17, JERS: 16:183.

fill. With close to 2,500 workers registered, the majority of evacuees was without regular employment, which posed a major problem for people unaccustomed to sitting idly. Moreover, almost 2,000 detainees were sixteen and under, and many of those children grew restless and disruptive once classes were finished.[499] The daunting task of filling the spare time of these people was taken up by the recreation department, which organized sports as well as entertainment and cultural events.

Immediately after their arrival, the inmates set about to remodel barracks and parts of the infield into makeshift gyms, basketball courts, and baseball diamonds. Schools and churches generously donated equipment.[500] After about two months, inmates had organized several baseball and basketball leagues. Other sports evacuees could engage in were football, tennis, table tennis, softball, boxing, or judo, as well as *go* and *shogi.*[501] Wandering about Tanforan on a sunny Sunday in mid-August, Charles Kikuchi witnessed an abundance of activities:

> I could see about five baseball games in progress. Near the barbershop in the infield a lot of fellows were pitching horseshoes […]. Next to them […] the *Sumo* wrestlers were occupied. About 100 persons were sailing boats on the lake. Great crowds stand around the edge of the lake looking on, especially at the man who gives rides to kids in the boat he has built. The builder of the big sailboat is a former captain of a fishing schooner. Henry Fujita, the national fly-casting champion, and his son usually come out to the lake on Sunday afternoons to practice. The new lake is more a scenic spot where couples go strolling over the bridge or sit on the benches under the transplanted row of trees around the edge of the lake. A fire tower is being constructed […] near one end of this lake for the firemen to practice on […]. Sunday is also a big day for tennis, two courts have been laid out on the tracks up by the post office, and there are always lots of golfers going around the miniature 9-hole golf course on the infield. For those who prefer milder activity, there are the weekly bridge tournaments. The rest of the people go visiting each other or else have visitors in the grandstand.[502]

To foster the impression of normalcy, the camp newspaper dedicated more space to recreation activities than to any other single topic. At least two full pages featured league news and reviews that rivaled *Sports Illustrated*. Headlines like NORTH SOFTBALLERS TRIM SOUTHERNERS BY 5-2 COUNT were followed by succinct analyses:

> The North-South softball tilt had all the earmarks of a terrific battle, but when the fury of hits and runs had subsided, the North, aided by the sterling 2 hit performance of Sus Ota, vanquished the boys from the other side of the tracks.[503]

Although American sports predominated, sumo was more popular than some Nisei liked to admit. Once a Nisei tried to stop the sumo matches, supposedly because he deemed them un-American, by claiming the administration forbade them. As no such rule was known, the sumo people asked their Advisory Council to clarify the issue with the administration. As it turned out, the camp director knew nothing about a ban on sumo matches, stating that he had no objections.[504] Even the

499 *Diary*, Doris Hayashi, p. 46, June 10, 1942, JERS: 17:111; Mine Okubo: *Citizen 13660,* New York: Columbia University Press, [3]1983, pp. 98-101.
500 Like schooling, the recreation program depended on the evacuees' initiative and outside support. See U.S. Army: *Final Report*, pp. 207-208.
501 The *Tanforan Totalizer* is the best source on recreation activities. Each issue reviewed the weekly highlights of recreation and entertainment and contained information on current leagues.
502 Modell (ed.): *Kikuchi Diary*, pp. 224-225.
503 *Tanforan Totalizer*, Issue 17, August 29, 1942, p. 6.
504 *Minutes of the Advisory Council*, p. 4, June 22, 1942, JERS: 14:383.

Tanforan Totalizer, which avoided showing any sympathy for Japanese traditions, announced in late August: "Shorn of all its ceremonial trimmings, sumo, one of the oldest sports in the world, made its debut to 2,000 spectators last Sunday."[505]

Sumo matches were popular primarily with Issei, Kibei, and small children (Sansei). Nisei usually shunned them because they thought them "too Japanesy."[506] Ben Iijima, witnessing a sumo contest for the first time in his life, noted with some bewilderment: "The object of sumo seems to be to push the opponents out of the ring or throw him down. The referee has a fan-like object in his hand, which he uses to designate the winner." What Iijima found most objectionable was the clothing, or rather the lack of it: "The contestants were attired with only a heavy cloth wrapped around their waist. […] Personally, I don't think that was any place for girls to go to."[507] Despite his moral concerns there were young Nisei women who, although likewise puzzled, enjoyed the show:

> It was all Greek to us, but after a while we got excited during the final elimination bouts. There are lots of ritualistic forms to follow in this game and the costumes they use are very crude (practically nothing). It seems that height and build have very little bearing on ability because coordination, speed, and ability to stay on the ground are very important. There are three rounds, and the person who wins two out of three wins. […] I noticed that the type of people present were rather heterogeneous, with the Issei predominating (mostly men). There were about one-third young people present, especially Buddhists, but they were of all ages, from ten years old to college graduates. Some people came and went in a few minutes, but most of them stayed quite a while. It is fun to watch if you catch on to the purpose of it. (It is similar to wrestling.)[508]

This episode is worth mentioning for two reasons: First, it demonstrates how thoroughly most Nisei were Americanized and how little they knew of Japanese culture.[509] Secondly, the matches reveal two kinds of reactions typical of Nisei: One was to shun contact with anything Japanese, heeding the administration's mantra: "You Nisei have a large task ahead of you to keep the young ones Americanized and fall not under the first generation influence. The Issei are hopeless."[510] In short, fearing to appear un-American, some Nisei categorically denied any sympathy towards Japanese sports. Another kind of reaction was forthright curiosity. Those who watched the matches unbiased often found them fascinating and thus developed common ground with their parents.[511]

The recreation department also organized weekly dancing classes. While Kibei where more inclined to folk dancing Nisei favored the Jitterbug, just as they embraced everything that was uniquely American.[512] The Jitterbug was also popular as being an antipode of typical Japanese forms

505 *Tanforan Totalizer*, Issue 17, August 29, 1942, p. 7.
506 Modell (ed.): *Kikuchi Diary*, p. 113, 117, 127.
507 *Diary*, Ben Iijima, June 7, 1942, JERS: 17:369.
508 *Diary*, Doris Hayashi, p. 37, June 7, 1942, JERS: 17:107.
509 Doris Hayashi uses the term "judo bouts" to describe sumo. Times have changed since 1942, as Asian martial arts have become absorbed into American mainstream culture. Today it is very improbable to get branded as "un-American" for practicing sports such as teakwondo, kendo, or judo.
510 George Greene to the editor of the *Totalizer*, as cited in Modell (ed.): *Kikuchi Diary*, p. 164.
511 Although numbers are difficult to ascertain, there seemed to be a tendency among Nisei to grow more open-minded towards their parents' interests in the course of their stay in Tanforan.
512 *Diary*, Ben Iijima, July 12, 1942, JERS: 17:439; *Tanforan Totalizer*, Issue 8, July 4, 1942, p. 7; Modell (ed.): *Kikuchi Diary*, pp. 61, 81, 126. The Jitterbug, a swing dance, originated in the late 1930s and celebrated its first success on the

of expressions, such as *kabuki*. Furthermore, the Jitterbug, with its fast and violent movements, expressed the Nisei's irrepressible zest for life and their self-image as avant-garde Americans. Finally, the Jitterbug – like all recreational activities – served as an outlet of energies in a repressive climate, providing a momentary escape from concentration camp life with its unresolved tensions, uncertainties and senselessness. The following quote is taken from an evacuee letter, addressed to friends at the Santa Anita Assembly Center:

> I learned how to jitterbug and you ought to see me and Nish and Tommie cut the capers at our weekly Saturday night dance. We just about break our necks trying to get dates though. I went to all the dances since I got here which includes about 14 of them and I've taken different girls every time, except twice. I'm running out of girls that I can ask, but I keep trying. Maybe I'll start from the beginning all over again.[513]

Charles Kikuchi realized that a variety of activities fully occupied his leisure-time:

> Sunday night: party; Monday: folk dancing; tonight: precinct meeting for nomination of Congressmen; Wednesday: Town Hall; Thursday: lecture; Friday: invited to party held by the file clerk girls or work on paper; Saturday: dance; Sunday, invited to party.[514]

Thus time passed quickly:

> Three months in a concentration camp! Life goes smoothly on. I should be more dissatisfied and rebellious, but much against my will I'm forced to admit that I'm getting adjusted to this restricted life and falling into a smooth and regular rut.[515]

This was a common feeling, once the excitement had passed. Some inmates literally felt guilty of escaping from reality, reasoning that such distractions were meaningless, unreal, a waste of time. They feared that all those activities distracted from the real issues, yet they could not do away with them.[516] However, there was no danger in losing oneself permanently in shallow joys. The hours of felicity were rare; every morning the Jitterbuggers faced anew the stark reality of camp life. Light-hearted social gatherings were first and foremost a temporary escape from the oppressiveness of camp life, keeping the emotional climate at Tanforan balanced.

In order to counterbalance these light activities the recreation department also hosted a cultural program. Weekly talent shows, quiz shows, variety shows, and kite contests attracted mainly Nisei, while Issei preferred classical concerts, featuring works by Schumann, Streabbog, Bach, McDowell, Strauss, Tchaikovsky, Puccini, and Gershwin.[517] Serving as a magnet for all generations were baby contests, beauty contests, and a "Playhouse Petite" featuring a comedy, a drama, a pantomime farce and several piano, violin and dance numbers. There was even a dance band in Tanforan, consisting of two alto sax, one tenor sax, three trumpets, one trombone, one baritone, piano, drums, and a guitar.[518]

West Coast, in Oakland and Los Angeles. Starting as an avant-garde subculture it quickly became a trend-setting way of expression for young Americans.

513 *Letter*, Fred Hoshiyama to Deki, July 22, 1942, JERS: 18:143.

514 Modell (ed.): *Kikuchi Diary*, p. 187.

515 Ibid., p. 200.

516 *Visit to Tanforan with Dr. Thomas and Mrs. Knight*, anonymous, July 28, 1942, JERS: 16:098; *Diary*, Ben Iijima, August 12, 1942, JERS: 17:452-453; Modell (ed.): *Kikuchi Diary*, p. 234.

517 *Diary*, Doris Hayashi, p. 262, August 23, 1942, JERS: 17:220; ibid., pp. 59-61, June 11, 1942, JERS: 17:118-119.

518 *Tanforan Totalizer*, various issues.

A group of inmates interested in vaudeville shows organized a satire on camp life, including a few sideswipes at the administration. Some paragraphs were promptly censored but there were still enough clever jokes left to delight the audience.[519] A spectator noted in her diary after seeing the play (titled "Horse Stall, and that Ain't All"):

> It was a satire on camp life [and] very novel – in that it was original and slammed at the apathy of the employment office, the poor service in the mess halls, and the noise of the neighbors, the frequency of diarrhea, to mention a few.[520]

Movie nights, too, fell under the responsibility of the recreation department. A 16-mm movie projector, sound equipment and several educational films were loaned by the San Mateo Tuberculosis and Health Association. Each evacuee was allowed to visit one of the three shows per week. Movie nights had some particular features and consisted of much more than just the motion picture. Doris Hayashi provides us with a vivid description of the experience:

> Tonight I went to the movie with S.P. We went right after roll call and ran most of the way. Still we were about 100 yards from the beginning. There were three lines (three mess halls) and still there was a large crowd. At about 7:00 PM the people were beyond the post office. We stood around for an hour till opening time. Many girls knitted on socks and sweaters. Some fellows brought radios to listen to outside. Others sat on stools (which they brought for the show) and played bridge. Some students brought books to study for next day's lesson. The age group ranged from about 3 years to 55 years with the young people (school kids) predominating. There were about 1,500 present tonight.
>
> The arrangement inside was the front half of the room for those on cushions and the last half for those on chairs. The disadvantage for the latter was that floor was level so everyone had to crane his neck to see. On the other hand, those on the floor could look up and weren't hindered in their view, although they were probably uncomfortable in their position. The house managers and fire department acted as ushers and collected tickets, guided traffic, and warned the people not to take in newspapers or food. Of course, since these men are human and have friends, they were persuaded to not see a box of cheez-its here, and some newspapers there. […]
>
> The three-reel film (including the main film "spring parade"[…], a colored cartoon, and a travelogue) required three intermissions. Also the sound mechanism went out of order two times and was too loud at spots, but in general, it was satisfactory for the first time. Of course, the acoustics were rather poor since the room wasn't built for films […]. It was paid for by donations by individuals (a committee of five) and the residents in general.[521]

In short, it was a mixed blessing. Charles Kikuchi wrote that "seeing a show is a form of self-torture," and Earle Yusa noted in her diary that she was "[g]lad it was over when it was."[522]

Travelogues, slapstick comedies, musicals, sport shows and cartoons dominated the program.[523] When the movie committee scheduled Orson Welles' *Citizen Kane* the Caucasian

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519 *Discussions*, Doris Hayashi, p. 9, JERS: 16:247.
520 *Diary*, Doris Hayashi, July 17, 1942, p. 167, JERS: 17:173.
521 *Discussions*, Doris Hayashi, JERS: 16:271.
522 Modell (ed.): *Kikuchi Diary*, p. 230; *Diary*, Earle Yusa, August 10, 1942, JERS: 17:535. See also *Diary*, Ben Iijima, August 11, 1942, JERS: 17:450; *Diary*, B., p. 22, June 28, 1942, JERS: 16:185; Ibid., p. 65, July 31, 1942, JERS: 16:208; Okubo: *Citizen 13660*, pp. 87-88. All accounts have in common that motion picture showings were far from a regular cinematic experience but that in particular children and Issei, possibly because they cared less about physical discomforts, were eager to see them nevertheless.
523 Movies presented included slapstick comedies like Bud Abbott and Lou Costello's *Hold that Ghost,* and *The Boys from Syracuse,* a Broadway musical. *The Devil and Miss Jones* with Jean Arthur, a Hollywood classic that was nominated for two Oscars, was more serious, as was the drama *Hoosier Schoolboy* with Mickey Rooney*,* and the Tim McCoy Western *Gun Code.* Cartoons and the principal plays of the 1941 football season complemented the program.

recreation director objected, claiming it would be "too deep for 80% of the audience." He advised the movie committee to show only comedies.[524] However, the movies' intellectual value didn't mean much to the evacuees anyway. It was the event, an echo of normality, that made hundreds of people put up with the discomforts week after week.[525]

Not all activities were formally organized. Those who simply wanted to escape the hustle and bustle of the racetrack could be found at the grandstand. It was a popular place for inmates who favored more relaxed "activities:"

> People came to bask in the sun in the wind-protected privacy of the grandstand booths; others came for a private dice game. Some came to meditate, and there were those who came to sleep.[526]

Knitting was a popular pastime for women and even taken up by some of the young men.[527] Issei fathers occasionally helped their wives with the housework but otherwise spent a good deal of time smoking, meditating, and building sailboats.[528] The enthusiasm of Tanforan's shipbuilders was so tremendous that they asked the camp director for permission to order lead from the outside.[529] In victory gardens evacuees grew turnips, cucumbers, lettuce, string beans and sugar peas to supplement their camp diet.[530] A professionally run community nursery provided the mess halls with bouquets and even sent flowers to the Governor of California at his birthday.[531] In addition, two hobby shows presented the work of artists and craftsmen, including paintings, knitted garments, needlecraft, wooden handicraft articles, miniature house models, jewelry, sailboats, home-made candy, flower arrangement displays – all attesting to an impressive outlet of creative energies.[532]

The last part of this chapter deals with religious activities in Tanforan. In comparison to the education and recreation program, religious activities enjoyed even greater freedom from administrative influence. As a JERS study pointed out, "Religion is the one institution in Tanforan which apparently is not censored."[533] In fact, by exempting church services from the ban on Japanese language, Tanforan's administration stretched WCCA rules to the limit.[534]

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524 Modell (ed.): *Kikuchi Diary*, p. 230.
525 The question how much entertainment was appropriate eventually lead to arguments between recreation and education department. For example, Charles Kikuchi complained "The Rec guys believe that problems are solved if people don't think about them." Modell (ed.): *Kikuchi Diary*, p. 191. See also *Visit to Tanforan with Dr. Thomas and Mrs. Knight*, anonymous, July 28, 1942, JERS: 16:098.
526 Okubo: *Citizen 13660*, p. 101.
527 Ibid., p. 103.
528 *Diary*, Ben Iijima, July 5, 1942, JERS: 17:403; Modell (ed.): *Kikuchi Diary*, pp. 116, 135.
529 Frank Davis granted permission. *Minutes of the Advisory Council*, p. 6, July 7, 1942, JERS: 14:400.
530 *Diary*, Ben Iijima, June 6, 1942, JERS: 17:368; Uchida: *Desert Exile*, p. 87.
531 *Tanforan Totalizer*, Issue 18, September 5, 1942, p. 2.
532 *Tanforan Totalizer,* Issue 17, August 29, 1942, p. 5; *Diary*, B., p. 68, August 2, 1942, JERS: 16:209.
533 *First Month*, Shibutani, Najima, Shibutani, p. 51, JERS: 16:419.
534 WCCA regulations required evacuees to obtain a special permission to conduct services in Japanese. As a JERS study put it: "That Japanese language services were permitted seemed to be a great concession, for everything else in the camp was strictly censored." *First Month*, Shibutani, Najima, Shibutani, p. 51, JERS: 16:419. For regulations pertaining religious services see WCCA: *Concentration Camp U.S.A. Regulations*, pp. 1-3 (WCCA: *Operation Manual*, Section X-D-5).

Most people dressed up when they attended Sunday school and church services; a majority of the inmates wore better clothing than everyday wear, and girls could be found wearing silk stockings and high heels. On May 3, the first Sunday after Tanforan's induction, Protestants and Catholics held their first service in two vacant mess halls. Two weeks later, Buddhists and the Seventh Day Adventists held their first service. The need for spiritual sustenance was so overwhelming that at the first few Sundays "there was standing room only at both the Japanese and the English service."[535] However, the interest in religion waned towards the end of August, as many young people "developed other interests – [such] as badminton, strolling around the track, bridge sessions, just informal chats and visits."[536]

As for the venue, all denominations convened in decidedly puritanical surroundings. Only the Catholic mess hall featured benches, which some evacuees related to the fact the Caucasian director of the service division was Catholic.[537] Protestants and Buddhists together made up 90 percent of the camp population, comprising 60 and 30 percent of the population respectively.[538] Both cooperated on various occasions. The mother's day program, for example, was initiated by a Methodist minister, but during the program several Buddhist and Catholic priests spoke. A JERS study noted that in contrast to pre-evacuation cliquishness among religious groups "people were willing in overt fashion to pull together and combine for the good of all."[539]

While Protestants frequently invited ministers from their home parishes – they were only allowed to stay for the duration of the service[540] – Buddhists were even more dependent on religious workers from the outside because Buddhists priests, considered pro-Japanese and subversive, had been summarily interned prior to evacuation. Hence, a Caucasian priest, Frank Boden Udale who was ordained as a Buddhist priest under the name of Shaku Kyosen, came from San Francisco every Sunday to conduct the service. Challenging prejudices, he remarked that he did not care why people came to his service "but if they come, we shall try to make them good Buddhists and good Americans."[541] The San Francisco Buddhist temple also donated an organ, piano and public speaking system, gifts which all denominations shared.[542]

Despite the initial assertion that inmates enjoyed considerable autonomy regarding religious activities, the toleration of the administration had its limits. For example, Frank Davis cancelled a

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535 Uchida: *Desert Exile*, p. 86.
536 *Religion*, JERS: 16:299. Buddhist reacted to the new surroundings by announcing special dancing classes for their members. See Modell (ed.): *Kikuchi Diary*, p. 128.
537 Modell (ed.): *Kikuchi Diary*, pp. 220-221.
538 *Population and Composition*, JERS: 16:327. This ratio is due to the fact that many Buddhists but almost no Christians had been interned by the Justice Department. See chapter 2.
539 *Religion*, JERS: 16:278.
540 House majority leader John W. McCormack (D-MA) proposed to allow priests to reside with the Catholic people in Assembly Centers but his suggestion never materialized. See *Letter, Congressman McCormack to Secretary of War Stimson*, June 20, 1942, (and Stimson's reply from June 30) in Daniels (ed.): *American Concentration Camps*, Vol. 6.
541 *First Month*, Shibutani, Najima, Shibutani, pp. 51-52, JERS: 16:419.
542 *Tanforan Totalizer*, Issue 17, August 29, 1942, p. 3.

meeting on the topic "Our moral responsibility," jointly organized by the Protestant and Buddhist Church.[543] As reason Davis quoted the resignation of the main speaker, police chief Jerry Easterbrooks. Since there were five more speakers scheduled, the evacuees immediately suspected that Easterbrooks' drop out was merely a pretext. In truth, it was said, Davis was afraid of large gatherings in which evacuees could freely voice their opinions. In fact, the WCCA's *Operation Manual* explicitly warned camp directors that religious activities were "not [to be] used as a vehicle to propagandize or incite [the evacuees]."[544] It is doubtful that a discussion of moral responsibilities would have incited the evacuees, but Davis' cancellation followed a pattern. His actions consistently show that he held the evacuees under general suspicion of plotting against peace or of planning to overthrow camp rule once left to their own resources. His fears, unfounded as they were, betrayed the widespread misconception of the Japanese as inherently alien and inscrutable people, a misconception that had been fostered over decades of anti-Oriental agitation. In any case, the evacuees were irritated by the cancellation because they had submitted three speeches in Japanese for translation and approval by the WCCA headquarters, and despite going through the complicated procedures they were forbidden to hold them.[545]

All in all, church services with their prayers, singing and meditation helped many evacuees to cope with anxieties and to make sense of their situation. Both Buddhism and Christianity contained the notion of suffering at the core of their teachings: Christianity, with its emphasis on forbearance and suffering, provided a forceful role model for inmates to relate to. Buddhism even presupposes suffering as the natural state of human existence.[546] Yet there is ample evidence that only a very small proportion of Tanforan's population applied these principles to their everyday lives.[547] Most Japanese were used to rely on hard work rather than prayers. They were fundamentally pragmatic, down-to-earth people. Remarked Ben Iijima after his parents returned from Sunday service: "Mother and father both enjoyed the sermon. Dad said the speaker was an old trouper of eighty-four and liked him because he didn't speak too much about god."[548]

Be it religion, recreation, or education, the administration recognized the importance of keeping its subjects as occupied and "happy" as possible, displaying a great deal of tolerance and stretching the

543 Technically, WCCA regulations forbid mass meetings, but evacuees found out that Army rules could be sidestepped by declaring the meeting as a religious event.
544 WCCA: *Concentration Camp U.S.A. Regulations,* p. 1 (WCCA: *Operation Manual*, Section X-D-5).
545 *Religion*, JERS: 16:276-277.
546 With respect to Relocation Camps Gary Okihiro noted a return to Buddhism, which he interpreted as a form of cultural resistance to the WRA's Americanization efforts and as a way to preserve the ethnic identity. As regards Tanforan I found no indicators for a revival of Buddhism but certainly substantial toleration of Buddhism. See Gary Okihiro: "Religion and Resistance in America's Concentration Camps," *Phylon* Vol. 45 (1984), pp. 220-233.
547 Modell (ed.): *Kikuchi Diary*, pp. 75 & 241; *Diary*, B., p. 9, June 14, 1942, JERS: 16:178; ibid., p. 28, July 5, 1942, JERS: 16:189; *Religion*, JERS: 16:299; *Diary*, Doris Hayashi, p. 6, May 17, 1942, JERS: 17:091; ibid., p. 37, June 7, 1942, JERS: 17:107; ibid., p. 77, June 21, 1942, JERS: 17:127; ibid., p. 225, August 9, 1942, JERS: 17:204.
548 *Diary*, Ben Iijima, July 12, 1942, JERS: 17:417.

rules the Army had laid down. This strategy, one might argue, paid off. The inmates neither lapsed into apathy nor used their energy to do mischief, as the administration feared. Instead they organized on their own initiative a plethora of activities which occupied them most of the time, provided an outlet for their energies, and contributed to a greater sense of togetherness. At the same time it has been demonstrated that being occupied did not imply that the inmates gave themselves over to the illusion of a holiday camp, as fostered by the administration. On the contrary, they grew more aware of the larger issues, particularly the injustice of their incarceration. The administration's efforts to quell any attempts at critical thinking merely caused the opposite. That the keepers of Tanforan nevertheless tried to manipulate the inmates' perception of their imprisonment is a central theme of the following chapter, which will deal with Tanforan's weekly newspaper, the *Tanforan Totalizer*.

7 – The Camp Press

> *Let us with the mature minds do your thinking for you. You people are in a tough spot and the administration here has been picked because we know a little more about life than you do.*
>
> – George A. Greene, Head of Service Division[549]

> *We took a poll this afternoon, and all of us honestly believe that we put out the best paper, followed by Santa Anita… After we got through rating the papers, we decided that we were too conceited, and that all of the papers were the same – all lousy, because we could not print what was really going on and that it presented a false picture of things by only mimeographing the bright side of things. We felt that we could have done a lot more if we were allowed to have more freedom in constructive criticism.*
>
> – Charles Kikuchi[550]

The *Tanforan Totalizer* has been quoted throughout this work because this weekly newspaper filtered the whole spectrum of the Assembly Center experience. But it was far more than "a weekly bulletin reporting on what is going on in camp – about a week late," as a JERS study claimed.[551] The Totalizer was a powerful tool, utilized by both prisoners and keepers, to shape the way evacuees perceived their incarceration. By analyzing what was reported and how it was reported, it becomes apparent that apart from disseminating information, the promulgation of normality and the improvement of morale were the central concerns of the *Totalizer*. A closer reading reveals, however, that despite an overtly accommodationist tone, the *Totalizer* contained ambiguous passages that can be read as subtle criticism. Another conspicuous feature that merits discussion is censorship. Although there never was an official censorship policy, the administration and a representative of the Army strictly supervised the *Totalizer*, forestalling any critical discussion of politics and camp affairs. The chapter's closing remarks seek to determine to what degree censorship influenced the *Totalizer's* overall agenda. I argue that self-censorship was far more critical than administrative censorship in perpetuating the illusion of a normal community.

By way of introduction, let me delineate the institutional framework under which Assembly Center newspapers operated. Fifteen of the sixteen Assembly Centers had a mimeographed newspaper although the Army never devised a newspaper policy.[552] Recognizing, however, "the necessity for some means of presenting the activities of the centers to the evacuees," the Army let the Assembly

549 From a conversation with Charles Kikuchi, August 7, 1942. See John Modell (ed.): *The Kikuchi Diary. Chronicle from an American Concentration Camp: The Tanforan Journals of Charles Kikuchi*, Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1973, p. 212.
550 *Censorship*, Taro Katayama, Charles Kikuchi, et al, p. 1, JERS: 16:459.
551 *The First Month at Tanforan. A Preliminary Report*, Tamotsu Shibutani, Haruo Najima, Tomiko Shibutani, p. 20, JERS: 14:403.
552 For an overview of the Assembly Center newspapers see Takeya Mizuno: "Journalism under Military Guards and Searchlights: Newspaper Censorship at Japanese American Assembly Camps during World War II," *Journalism History* Vol. 29 (2003), pp. 98-106.

Center authorities decide if and under which framework a newspaper was to be published. The Army merely provided a Press Relation Representative (i.e. censor) "who saw that news items were confined to those of actual interest to the evacuees."[553] We shall see later in this chapter that Army and administration had a very narrow conception of what was of "actual interest."

Much of what was put in practice in Assembly Centers was later absorbed into the WRA's official newspaper policy, which promulgated the axiom that the camp press was to operate "free but under supervision."[554] In practice, the freedom of the Assembly Center press was reduced to the freedom to publish what the administration and the Army's censor agreed with. Consequently, depending on the degree of self-censorship of the evacuees on one side, and the degree of tolerance of the authorities on the other, censorship was exercised more or less routinely. Furthermore, the Army as well as the WRA incorporated the "free" camp press in the domestic and foreign propaganda by suggesting that First Amendment rights were upheld, and by emphasizing the humane nature of mass incarceration.[555]

Before turning to the *Totalizer's* agenda let us consider some basic statistics. The first issue, consisting of four pages, was published on Saturday, May 15. The following 18 weeks each of the 2,800 family units in Tanforan received a copy of the *Totalizer* delivered free of charge to its stall door.[556] By issue 8 the volume was increased to ten pages, averaging at that number for subsequent issues. The final issue, published on September 12, comprised 26 pages. About twelve evacuees worked for the newspaper, six of whom were paid.[557] Following Army regulations, the *Totalizer* was

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553 U.S. Army, Western Defense Command and Fourth Army: *Final Report: Japanese Evacuation from the West Coast, 1942*, Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1943, p. 213; Mizuno: *Journalism under Military Guards*, p. 100.

554 Takeya Mizuno: "The Creation of the 'Free' Press in Japanese-American Camps: The War Relocation Authority's Planning and Making of the Camp Newspaper Policy," *Journalism and Mass Communication Quarterly* Vol. 78 (2001), pp. 503-518; Lauren Kessler: "Fettered Freedoms: The Journalism of World War II Japanese Internment Camps," *Journalism History* Vol. 15 (1988), pp. 70-79.

555 To explore in how far the *Tanforan Totalizer* succeeded in influencing outside opinion requires a separate study: Officially no copies were sent outside except one to the Library of Congress and one to the library of the University of California. However, some evacuees sent their copies to friends outside, and the *San Francisco Chronicle* as well as the *Berkeley Gazette* quoted infrequently from the *Totalizer*. Charles Kikuchi received a dollar by an unknown visitor who told him to send the *Totalizer* to interested people outside so the public sees "how American your group really are." (Modell (ed.): *Kikuchi Diary*, p. 156.) The downside of spreading a varnished picture was, "that some people think we're having a summer vacation in a resort," as Doris Hayashi realized after reading an article in the *San Francisco Chronicle* of August 18. (*Diary*, Doris Hayashi, p. 245, August 19, 1942, JERS: 17:214.) A study on the WCCA's public relations would need to include the analysis of the Army's documentary (parts of it are used in the 1995 documentary *Tanforan: Race Track to Assembly Center*, published by CrossCurrent Media (see bibliography)) and the WCCA's photograph publishing policy. For the latter see, *Telegram, Edwin Bates (WCCA Information Service Division) to John Bird (WRA Information Division)*, May 26, 1942, JERS: 13:527; *Memorandum "Clearance of Pictures and Negatives", Norman Beasley (WCCA Public Relation Division) to Edwin Bates (WCCA Information Service Division)*, June 9, 1942, JERS: 13:528; and the *Dorothea Lange Papers Relating to the Japanese-American Relocation, 1942-1974*, stored at the Bancroft Library, University of California. The *Dorothea Lange Papers* were not available in 2006, pending the microfilming of the collection in 2007.

556 There were 2,200 family heads and 600 bachelors in Tanforan. See *Diary*, Doris Hayashi, p. 275, August 28, 1942, JERS: 17:226.

557 The *Totalizer* staff comprised Taro Katayama (editor-in-chief), Bob Tsuda, Jim Yamada, Charles Kikuchi (associate editors), Bill Hata (sports), Ben Iijima (recreation), Alex Yorichi (kitchen), Lillian Ota (women), Albert Nabeshima (copy boy), Yuki Shiozawa, Sam Yanagisawa, Marguerite Nose, Emiko Kikuchi, Yuri Oshima (technical staff), Bennie Nobori, Nobuo Kitagaaki (art), Alex Yorichi (circulation). See *Tanforan Totalizer*, Issue 19, September 12, 1942, p. 2. Sketches of various staff members can be found in *Diary*, Ben Iijima, August 11, 1942, JERS: 17:450.

published exclusively in English. Its statement of purpose was put forward in the opening editorial:

> The *Tanforan Totalizer* is intended to be this center's paper in every way. Its interests are those of all the residents here. It is not the organ of any self-seeking group and will not play any politics. It will seek to promote a democratic and cooperative spirit within the community as the basis of all action whether individual or collective.
>
> That the paper may be truly representative of the whole community, it will be open to every sort of suggestion from its readers for improving it […]. All those interested in the venture are invited to take active part in the publication.
>
> The present temporary staff has taken the initiative in starting the paper in the belief that the common good would be served thereby.[558]

Printed below, the camp director's announcement stressed cooperation and urged compliance with rules:

> I would like to impress upon every resident the importance of accepting his full share of responsibility in the operation of the Center. […] There is a big job to be done and everyone must do his or her part.
>
> It will be the policy of the management to make this community as self-governing as possible. The success of this policy and the happiness and welfare of everyone will depend on the cooperation of all concerned.
>
> Only such rules and regulations will be made by the management as are necessary for the health, welfare and best interests of all concerned. Strict compliance with those regulations is essential.[559]

Administrative announcements such as the above usually filled the first two of the *Totalizer's* ten pages. They pertained to visiting policies, roll call regulations, clarifications on scrip book allowances, absentee voting information for the state primaries, and disclaimers of persistent rumors, such as the pregnancy of 700 women.[560]

The greater part of the paper listed succinctly annotated schedules of daily activities. About two pages were dedicated to sports and other leisure activities. Recreation and entertainment took up another two pages, minimum, featuring lists on intramural leagues, movies, dances, talent shows, variety shows, and classical concerts. The education section, which took up about one page, included announcement on adult classes and the gist of the weekly town hall discussion. Furthermore, each issue contained information on central services, such as the opening hours of the hospital, the post office, the lost and found bureau, the library, and the schedules of the various church services.

Apart from these essentials, the *Totalizer* featured miscellaneous announcements, such as recent births. (Deaths were not to be reported, the administration explained, because death did not "represent progress."[561]) Some announcements had no information value at all, merely serving to create a cheerful atmosphere. For instance, the *Totalizer* reported about a resident who jumped into the lake catching duck to win a bet, or about "the spectacle of mothers using adjoining laundry tubs to bath their shower-shy but otherwise unembarrassed younger children," or about the "Infield

558 *Tanforan Totalizer*, Issue 1, May 15, 1942, p. 1.
559 Ibid., p. 1.
560 As evacuees worked in all departments, information leaks occurred frequently and served as a basis for rumors. In this example, the actual number of pregnancies was 70 instead of 700.
561 *Censorship*, Taro Katayama, Charles Kikuchi, et al, p. 2, JERS: 16:453. There were 64 births and 22 deaths, see WCCA: *Bulletin No. 12,* March 15, 1943*,* pp. 100-102, or Table 8.

Odysseys" of men who got lost after escorting home their girlfriends, or about teary reunions between evacuees and their pets.[562]

More meaningful were short columns that reflected on camp life. "With the Womenfolk" was such a column, giving practical advice on "womanly" issues, for example, how to treat dry skin, how to protect against the sun, how to get greasy dishes clean, and how to fight the all-present dust. A similar column was "Tips of the Week," which contains advice of more general nature. Almost all these columns follow the same pattern: First, they state the inconveniency of a particular situation. Second, selected evacuees tell how they deal with the situation. Third, it is resolved that the situation does not really pose a problem. To illustrate this pattern let us look at the article "Problem Children." This installment of "Tips of the Week" cites mothers who told from their experience of raising children to set an example for other mothers.

> Mrs. Kiyoshi Furuzawa (Issei), 57-5, Berkeley, declares that the center's recreational and educational programs "keep the children out of mischief."
>
> Mrs. Giichi Yoshioka, (Nisei), 89-1, Hayward, has a 4-year-old son. Her greatest concern is to teach him good manners. Though the boy at first asked many questions about "the paper houses with no bathrooms and kitchens," he seems quite contended now.
>
> Mrs. Tad Fujita, (Nisei), 2-16, Berkeley, considers bathing her 18-months-old child the biggest problem. She declares that there's not much difference between raising a small child in an assembly center and at home.[563]

Most polls dealing with Tanforan's living conditions fit this mold. Their value was less the practical advice, which was often missing, than the underlying message: that the problem was not acute and that there were many evacuees sharing the very same difficulties.

Another recurring message, or leitmotif, was betterment: The notion that conditions might be bad but that they had improved significantly since induction pervades the weekly "Your Opinion" columns as well as any other story on Tanforan's setup. (Stories about progress were credible because living conditions had indeed improved.) The following article, titled "Tanforan – a poor man's Shangri-la," illustrates this point. It is worth quoting in full because it is emblematic of the *Totalizer's* tenor:

> Although there never was any weeping or wailing, it was with some consternation that we took at first the muddy roads, the bean diet, the horse stables, and the enforced idleness.
>
> The situation has changed since then. The roads have been repaired with gravel. The food has been improved so much that many are saying it's better than what they used to eat before evacuation. The barracks have become more habitable as the horsey [sic] odor disappeared and apartments have been furnished with homemade furniture and curtains.
>
> Then we no longer have the rent and the gas bills to harass us. Neither do we have to meet the high wartime living costs. A monthly allowance of scrip books and clothes are provided by the Government.
>
> Little excuse for idleness is afforded by the educational and recreational programs and the various available jobs.
>
> However, the residents do not want to get so much for nothing, and on many occasions has a member of the Administration staff commended our willingness to cooperate. In turn, the

562 *Tanforan Totalizer*, Issue 4, June 6, 1942 p. 3; ibid., Issue 2, May 23, 1942, p. 1; ibid., Issue 6, June 20, 1942, p. 7; ibid., Issue 13, August 1, 1942, p. 3.
563 *Tanforan Totalizer*, Issue 5, June 13, 1942, p. 7.

residents here are given less restrictions than are those in the other centers.[564]

Apart from improvements of facilities and food, three more arguments can be discerned supporting the author's central claim – a hyperbole with a touch of irony – that Tanforan resembled an earthly paradise. First, the advantage of getting free food and accommodation is emphasized (while keeping quiet about the gross inadequacies of housing and feeding). Second, the availability of work is stressed (while widespread forced inactivity and low wages are gloss over). Third, evacuees and custodians are depicted as equal bargainers (to de-emphasize the roles of prisoners and keepers). It must be added, though, that all these statements were essentially true. Even the allegory of equal bargainers quite accurately reflects the way prisoners and keepers interacted in everyday life. However, as the parenthesized comments indicate, the editors highlighted only one half of the picture while omitting the other.

What also strikes the reader is the selection of topics ("agenda setting" in the jargon of journalism). Issues under discussion range from "Should Nisei girls smoke?", "Should women marry younger men?", "Should we dress up on Sundays?", to "What is the Japanese American conception of America?", "Should we open up a second front in Europe now?", "What qualities should a wife/husband have?"[565] There is not a single question on the evacuation and related issues although these topics were ardently argued in private, and even in the public town hall discussions. Since the absence of controversial issues stands in contrast to the vivid interest in them, the limited range of topics clearly points to self-censorship.

Also absent in the *Totalizer* were accounts of conflicts between prisoners and wardens. The only act of rebellion reported was the case of a 17-year-old Nisei who threw a rock against a sentry tower.[566] The incidence was kept secret for over a week, but eventually the administration was forced to let the *Totalizer* report the case because rumors spread that the Military Police had imprisoned the teenager, whereupon a great many of the evacuees grew agitated and demanded the release of their fellow inmate. The article cleared up the incident, stating that the boy had apologized immediately and had been reprimanded but not punished. Although there occurred a number of similar incidents, none of them found entry into the *Totalizer*.[567]

In addition to the promulgation of harmony and normality, the *Totalizer* featured a number of articles that purely served the purpose of raising the evacuees' morale. Taking up about one page, the employment section was such a morale builder. Each column in this section was designed to support

564 *Tanforan Totalizer*, Issue 9, July 11, 1942, p. 8.
565 *Tanforan Totalizer*, Issues 6-11, June 20-July 15, 1942.
566 *Tanforan Totalizer*, Issue 7, June 27, 1942, p. 2.
567 A second incident – an evacuee threw a stone through a window of an administration building – caused less upheaval. The administration asked the house managers to discuss the issue discreetly within their blocks and published a uniform announcement to deter evacuees from similar actions. See *Minutes of House Managers' Meeting*, July 4, 1942, JERS: 14:510. In addition, there were at least two escape attempts that went by unreported (see Modell (ed.): *Kikuchi Diary*, pp. 86-87, and chapter 3 of this work). Those exceptions aside, I found no spectacular acts of rebellion. Dissatisfaction was normally expressed in strikes and everyday acts of resistance.

evacuee workers by stressing their indispensable value for the common good. It contained statements of gratitude addressing residents who labored beyond the call of duty for the community welfare (such as daily cleaning the latrines), and interviews with employees, particularly menial workers, who toiled away for a meager $8 a month. In addition, each week one professional group was introduced and their work routine described. On June 13, for example, inmates read under the heading "Working Girl. The Waitress Rises at Dawn:"

> Rising with the cold gray dawn, the waitress dashes down to the mess hall. The time-keeper gives her the inevitable greeting, "Look what time it is." Serving time – she dashes madly about with a heavy pitcher in one hand and a wet rag in the other. The irate cries of the "customers" assail her from all sides.
>
> "Where is the coffee?"
>
> "What, no sugar?"
>
> "Oh, this again!"
>
> The crowd leaves and she sighs in relief. But that isn't all. Salad dishes have to be washed. She moans woefully as she thinks what the Clorox and the hot water might do to her hands. Moreover, the silverware must be polished.
>
> The same hectic routine goes on 3 times a day, every day. The hard-working girls of the mess halls aren't complaining, but they would appreciate a little more consideration from the center residents.[568]

Providing rare glimpses into the tense atmosphere of everyday life, the above quotation illustrates the need for commending those who worked hard for the community, as well as the need to foster empathy. The *Totalizer* staff recognized these needs, and columns such as the above doubtlessly played a crucial role in reducing many of the undercurrent tensions.[569] It is worth noting that these columns took an existing narrative pattern in American society which had become widespread during the Depression years of the 1930s: enduring hardship with collective effort to overcome it.[570] This narrative theme was transposed to the camp experience, though those who promoted it elided, by omission, the idea that the camp hardship was created by a prejudiced and frightened society, and that it was, as many felt but did not pronounce openly, unnecessary.

To further bolster the morale the *Totalizer* featured short biographies of outstanding individuals. A typical example is John Izumi, who worked in Tanforan as principal of the junior high school. A mathematics graduate from the University of California he had "temporarily shelved his ambitions to be an aircraft designer."[571] Further on we read that John Izumi worked as a free-lance automobile salesman, bus-boy captain, waiter, and houseboy. "His best bet now, he thinks, is to return

568 *Tanforan Totalizer*, Issue 5, June 13, 1942, p. 7.

569 Confined to narrow space with much time to spare, factionalism, misunderstandings, and petty conflicts were widespread. This can be inferred from announcements such as: "The police ask that all softball players and spectators try to keep their partisan enthusiasm from becoming too heated," see *Tanforan Totalizer,* Issue 11, July 18, 1942, p. 2. Another article advised male Nisei singles to be respectful to their date's parents: "Too many Nisei forget this little courtesy," see ibid., Issue 15, August 15, 1942, p. 8. In addition, evacuee diaries are replete with examples of everyday conflicts. See, for example, Modell (ed.), *Kikuchi Diary*, pp. 60, 72, 89, 95, 105, 110-111, 116, 119-120, 133, 139-140, 243-244, *Diary*, Ben Iijima, June 25, 1942, JERS: 17:386-387, ibid., July 8, 1942, JERS: 17:412, *Diary*, B., July 5, 1942, JERS: 16:189, *First Month*, Shibutani, Najima, Shibutani, p. 39, JERS: 16:413, Yoshiko Uchida: *Desert Exile. The Uprooting of a Japanese American Family*, Seattle and London: University of Washington Press, 1982, p. 96.

570 See, for example, *It Happened One Night* (1934), *My Man Godfrey* (1936), *The Grapes of Wrath* (1940) or *Meet John Doe* (1941).

571 *Tanforan Totalizer,* Issue 13, August 1, 1942, p. 5.

to Hawaii and help his brother to manage a supermarket."[572] Izumi's vita was emblematic for second generation Japanese Americans, being highly qualified but barred from better jobs by the economic depression and racial prejudice. (In fact, people like Izumi were in great demand during World War II.) Stories such as Izumi's allowed for identification and raised community pride. Simultaneously, his prospect of working in a supermarket betrays his skepticism that after the war his country would be more amenable to highly skilled immigrant children of Japanese ethnicity.

Other biographical sketches have a decidedly patriotic overtone:

> Tatsu J. Ogawa, 46, fought with the famous 91st "Wild West" Division in the Meuse-Argonne offensive of World War I. Veteran Ogawa, a sergeant-at-arms of the 91st division association, is a member of the American Legion. With him fought Kaytaro Tsukamoto. About 20 legionnaires in all are in Tanforan, meeting informally and serving the center in various ways. They are all citizens, by birth or through grant of Congress for services rendered in World War I.[573]

In fact, the display of patriotism to the United States was a major cornerstone of the *Totalizer's* agenda: Patriotic ceremonies such as a camp-wide flag raising ceremony on May 26 and the celebration on Independence Day were covered at length.[574] And when 21-year-old Bill Kochiyama used a $2,000 inheritance to purchase $1,900 worth of war bonds, "to do my part in the war effort," as he put it, he received due commendation on the *Totalizer's* front page.[575] Other patriotic acts included acclamations for volunteer blood donors, reports on the collecting of tin cans, and the storage of grease for the production of nitroglycerin – always pointing out that "the Center had an oar in the national war effort."[576]

However, some of these patriotic gestures had an ironic overtone. When the government called upon American citizens to invest part of their salary in war bonds, several evacuees promptly sent in their paychecks. The *San Francisco Chronicle*, learning about paychecks coming from the local concentration camp, decided to publish one of the accompanying letters by an evacuee from Tanforan. In a tit-for-tat response the *Totalizer* staff reprinted the evacuee's letter from the *San Francisco Chronicle* in its section "Quote of the Week." It ran as follows:

> Dear Mr. Rowell,
>
> Although 100 per cent of my $3.17 paycheck isn't very much compared to the 100 per cent of others, please enroll me as a member in the "10 Per Cent War Savings Plan" with my first pay check as a kitchen worker at the Tanforan Assembly Center.

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572 Ibid., p. 5.

573 *Tanforan Totalizer*, Issue 6, June 20, 1942, p. 6.

574 More than half of the evacuees were attracted by these events. Reactions varied. An 18-year-old girl wrote: "As the flag was raised […] all the people gathered by the Tanforan Lake were very quiet. A lump came up my throat. The flag reached the top of the pole, and after a few seconds of pausing there, it was lowered to stop at half-mast. […] The National Anthem was sung by an Oakland girl; and as she sang I watched the Flag. The wind that constantly blows at this center furled the Flag and played with it. […] One speaker's words were very impressive to me, and I shall remember them for a long time to come. He reminded us of the soldiers fighting for us at some foreign battle front […] and said that we should be grateful to be able to live in the United States, although we are not able to live in our own home." (*Impressions of an Evacuee*, JERS: 17:340-341.) When the center director addressed the crowd, however, Doris Hayashi noted that, "some people gave Davis the raspberry." *Diary*, Doris Hayashi, p. 11, May 26, 1942, JERS: 17:094.

575 *Tanforan Totalizer*, Issue 7, June 27, 1942, p. 1. The story was reprinted in the *Berkeley Gazette*. After Davis learned about it, he agreed to increase the page number from six to ten. See Modell (ed.): *Kikuchi Diary*, pp. 156, 167-168.

576 *Tanforan Totalizer*, Issue 4, June 6, 1942; ibid., Issue 6, June 20, 1942, p. 2; ibid., Issue 19, September 12, 1942, p. 8.

> With an unshakable faith in America and its great leaders, I remain,
> Very truly yours,
> George Ishida.
>
> P.S. Please send me my savings stamps and especially my membership button.[577]

The *Chronicle* editorial noted: "Enclosed was a U.S. Treasury check for $3.17. Mr. Ishida's stamps and button should reach him today."[578] Albeit Ishida's letter was probably meant sincerely, parts of it must have sounded rather ironic to his contemporaries; in particular his praise of the "great leaders" who, after all, thought it safest to put him behind barbed wire.

The column "The Copy Boy Ses" poses another instance of ambiguity which can be interpreted as subtle criticism of conditions in Tanforan. "The Copy Boy Ses" was a regular feature, starting with issue 8. The column was written by Nobby (the pen name of the 14-year-old Albert Nabeshima) to whom the editors had given a "carte blanche to comment on anything and anybody in the center."[579] As we shall see later, the censors made sure that nothing negative was written on Tanforan's setup. However, the editors reasoned that the censors would consider the comments of a 14-year-old as naïve and harmless, therefore scrutinize them less closely. Indeed, Nobby's columns escaped expurgation although he frequently alluded to Tanforan's downsides and shortcomings:

> [On the camp store:] Four out of ten times they haven't got what I want. […] Now that free scrip books have been issued it is worse. I calmly wait about 15 minutes to get up to the counter and I wait another 15 minutes waiting for my turn. Then when my turn does come, I ask him politely what I want. He answers, "Sorry, we are sold out." Then I silently step out, muttering under my breath every swear word I know. But, can you blame me?[580]
>
> [On the library:] [The librarians] are all doing a swell job. […] One of the faults of the library is too many pictures torn out of the magazines, especially the Esquires. So, fellow Tanforaners, remember not to tear any of those […] pictures out of the Esquires. […] And try to return your books in time […].[581]
>
> [On the mess halls:] One of the things I do every day is to go to the mess hall and eat, or rather nibble. The food will last longer. Can you imagine, I got second helpings on beans. How about that!! But on the whole, we get very good food.[582]

Pointing with poignant humor at Tanforan's inadequate setup became the leitmotif of Nobby's columns. Moreover, even his fellow inmates were not safe from his pointed – but always merry – observations:

> The majority of the waitresses and waiters are very polite, but a few act as if they were members of Schickelgruber's storm troopers.[583] Fer instance, [sic] last week, I said to a waitress (the standard type with a low center of gravity; you know, the kind that if you pushed over would bob right up again), "May I have some tea?" (that's a Japanese chaser). No answer. I asked her again. Still no answer. Being a patient man, I screamed at her, "CAN I HAVE SOME TEA?" She came up to me and asked, "What can I do for you?" I don't know what kept me from moidering [sic] the gal.

577 *Tanforan Totalizer*, Issue 11, July 18, 1942, p.6.
578 *San Francisco Chronicle*, July 14, 1942.
579 *Tanforan Totalizer*, Issue 8, July 4, 1942, p. 7.
580 *Tanforan Totalizer*, Issue 11, July 18, 1942, p. 7.
581 *Tanforan Totalizer*, Issue 13, August 1, 1942, p. 7.
582 *Tanforan Totalizer*, Issue 12, July 25, 1942, p. 7.
583 An allusion to Hitler: Adolf Hitler's father had been baptized as Aloys Schickelgruber. A bastard of Maria Anna Schickelgruber he had his name changed to *Hitler*, after his stepfather, Johann Georg *Hiedler,* had died.

> People should take care of their manners at the table. Fer instance, [sic] there's a fella in one of the mess halls, who rushes in, sits down, grabs the food, gobbles it down, belches and rushes out. All that in about 7 minutes. We have given him the name of "Vacuum Cleaner."[584]

Not everybody viewed kindly Nobby's ruminations on the unpleasant aspects of imprisonment, notwithstanding his humorous tone. In the following issue the *Totalizer* reprinted a letter, undersigned "some griped readers:"

> A mere 14-year child has no right to tell the girls how and what to wear. What business is it of his to comment and insult other people's figures? Recently, he criticized the mess hall workers. After all, they are trying to please everyone. Furthermore, if he doesn't like beans, he can keep it to himself because he is not the only one who doesn't like beans. Since he has the privilege to write a column *he should write about more pleasant things*. Reading his column leaves a very disagreeable taste in our mouth. For the benefit of the paper, the public, and himself, it is our wish that he will wise up soon.[585] (emphasis added)

This reaction reveals how tense and sensitive some evacuees were as they tried to put a good face on things. To conjure up the "disagreeable" reality struck them as unconstructive, even cruel. They demanded that the daily deprivations remained untold, advocating self-censorship as a protective measure against the harsh reality.

Despite this, the unruly teenage-editor Nobby decided to steer the course by reverting to irony. "Wised up," apparently, he retorted in the subsequent issue:

> I am sorry to hear there are certain individuals who dislike my analysis of things and people in the center, so hereafter I will try not to be so destructive as I have been in the past, for the benefit of such sensitive souls.[586]

When it came to review a movie, he spread optimism in such a forced manner that he undermined his own credibility, mimicking his message:

> I was planning to write about the movie "Spring Parade" that was shown last week. Such as it was, the first showing had many faults such as the seating arrangement, sound effects and lightning. But I am sure they have eliminated those faults. Movies are good for the Center's morale.[587]

To sum up, then, mirth pervading the *Totalizer* served a twofold purpose. On one hand it kept morale from ebbing and promoted normality. But it also served as a disguise and a vehicle for subtle criticism, allowing the *Totalizer* staff to report a more truthful picture and to hint at Tanforan's bleak aspects, while bypassing the administration's censorship.

In spite of rigorous self-censorship, there were numerous instances when the administration still thought it necessary to wield the red pen. All in all, the *Totalizer* staff recorded 16 "main instances" of censorship,[588] some of which have been mentioned already in previous chapters. To make sure that the paper conformed to the view of Tanforan's keepers, every article had to go through a longwinded procedure of checking and re-checking before it was published:

584 *Tanforan Totalizer*, Issue 12, July 25, 1942, p. 7.
585 *Tanforan Totalizer*, Issue 13, August 1, 1942, p. 6.
586 *Tanforan Totalizer*, Issue 14, August 8, 1942, p. 7.
587 *Tanforan Totalizer*, Issue 16, August 22, 1942, p. 7.
588 *Censorship*, Taro Katayama, Charles Kikuchi, et al, pp. 1-13, JERS: 16:453-459.

> Here is how our copy goes now: I get the data (say from Finance Department) and write it up. Then it goes to McQueen [the official Army censor] for his O.K. Then it goes to Davis for his O.K. Then it goes to the head of the department for his O.K. Then the dummy is set and it gets an O.K., again from Davis. Then the stencil is cut and sent up to Davis again for his O.K. Then it is sent to the supply room and it sits on the desk of the chief until he gets around to give it the final approval and checks to see if it has Davis' signature on it.[589]

The most momentous instance of censorship occurred on Independence Day and resulted in the recall of more than 2,000 copies. Triggering the recall were statistical figures on Tanforan's employment situation that had been used without knowledge of the employment manager.[590] When the employment manager found out about the leak, he immediately reported to the camp director. It turned out that Frank Davis could not care less about the employment figures (they were included in the re-released issue) but when he took the opportunity to have a closer read, he found out that two corrections he made had not been implemented. These two changes were trifles, too: one was a wrong date for the issuance of scrip books, and the other minor changes to the wording of the constitution.[591]

Nevertheless, the camp manager got "madder than the devil" and had the evacuee editors lined up in his office, ordering them to immediately collect all copies of the *Totalizer*, without stating any reason.[592] After enduring the harangue the staff rushed off, and with the help of the house captains managed to collect 2,400 of the 2,800 copies. As news of the recall spread, everybody hastily read the paper to find out what was wrong.[593]

The next day Frank Davis came to the *Totalizer's* office and apologized: "I'm sorry I blew my head off yesterday. You fellows in the newspaper office are doing a swell job." The *Totalizer* staff watched puzzled, as both Taro Katayama and Frank Davis "kept saying they were sorry."[594] Later that day the camp director appeared again, being "very condescending and soft spoken," and asked the editors whether they needed anything, whereupon Katayama pointed out that, speaking of it, they needed a new box to make their heads on the stencil. Again later the head of the service division dropped by to help the newspaper staff unstapling the returned issues.[595]

After this episode Taro Katayama told his crew that nobody was to tell anybody about the

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589 Modell (ed.): *Kikuchi Diary*, pp. 78, 160-161.

590 The *Totalizer* staff had liaisons with the different departments which were all staffed by evacuees. Hence, it was easy to get almost any information about the camp. The problem was to get it published. In this case the editor (Charles Kikuchi) admitted that he had obtained the information by "devious methods." He even anticipated that "Mr. Gunder will throw a fit since he doesn't want to release anything until after completion [of the survey]." The information was ordinary enough to pass unnoticed by the Army censor and by the administration's censors. The employment figures appeared unchanged in the censored edition. See *Censorship*, Taro Katayama, Charles Kikuchi, et al, p. 5, JERS: 16:455.

591 As it turned out it was by accident, not by intention, that they had not been implemented: The two censors, McQueen and Greene, used a black pen to make their corrections. When the Totalizer staff picked up the corrected copy, they found that somebody with an unknown handwriting had made some red marks. As the red remarks were somewhat irritating the editors thought somebody had just made "funny red marks." They observed only the black corrections and went ahead publishing the issue. See *Diary*, Ben Iijima, July 5, 1942, JERS: 17:401.

592 *Diary*, Ben Iijima, July 4, 1942, JERS: 17:397. George Greene, who was present through the grilling, was more sympathetic: He invited Taro Katayama to take a seat and even defended him in spots.

593 Modell (ed.): *Kikuchi Diary*, p. 160.

594 *Diary*, Ben Iijima, July 5, 1942, JERS: 17:401.

595 *Censorship*, Taro Katayama, Charles Kikuchi, et al, pp. 5-8, JERS: 16:455-456; Modell (ed.): *Kikuchi Diary*, p. 160.

incident, in particular the fact that Davis had apologized.[596] He knew that the director had no intention to make his change of heart public, and that rumors of his remorse would undercut his authority and most probably put an end to his goodwill. And goodwill, Katayama knew, was all they could hope for in their situation. While the incident demonstrates that the administration took its responsibility as press "supervisors" very seriously, it also proves that the administration was keenly interested in keeping the newspaper running, in spite of misunderstandings.

Let us now examine more closely the causes of censorship. The absence of subversive thoughts in the *Totalizer* seemed, if anything, to fuel the censors' suspicion and sensitivity towards anything controversial. The most frequent cause calling forth the censors' intervention was any hint of criticism regarding the evacuation. When editor-in-chief Taro Katayama urged his readers in an editorial

> not speculate idly and fruitlessly on the special constraints and hardships – and, in many cases, the injustices – which the fortunes of the present war have laid on us,

George Greene put in "seeming" in front of "injustice."[597] The *Totalizer* staff tried to get Katayama to put quotes around "seeming," but he argued that this would only make their work more difficult.[598] A similar example can be found in the editorial of the next issue, in which Katayama quoted the following paragraph from the JACL's *Pacific Citizen*:[599]

> What happened to citizen Suzuki and 70,000 other American-born Japanese in the first year of America's war for world freedom is already a chapter in American history. The facts are all there. […] Only the human side of the picture remains to be filled in. Historians need documentation. The men who will write the human picture of the greatest forced movement of people in American history will do so from the personal records of the people themselves. […] We hope that citizen Suzuki is keeping record of his experience and his times.

McQueen, the Army's censor, crossed out the prophetic editorial and wrote next to it: "Do not use this."[600] Since inmates were able to read up on U.S. and wartime news in regular newspapers – Tanforan's center store carried the *San Francisco Chronicle*, the *San Francisco Examiner*, as well as the *Oakland Tribune* – the absence of politics in the *Totalizer* was not considered a drawback by its readership.[601]

However, the administration's suppression of information was not confined to political statements. One article reported about Tanforan's North Lake which evacuees had transformed from a muddy pool into a miniature aquatic park, complete with green lawn and shrubbery, a foot bridge, islands, three rock gardens, sand pits, promenades and benches.[602] Davis censored parts of the story

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596 *Diary*, Ben Iijima, July 5, 1942, JERS: 17:402.
597 *Tanforan Totalizer*, Issue 8, July 4, 1942, p. 1.
598 *Censorship*, Taro Katayama, Charles Kikuchi, et al, p. 4, JERS: 16:454.
599 The *Pacific Citizen*, a bi-weekly newspaper, was established in 1929 by the Japanese American Citizen League. After the outbreak of the war it moved its operation from San Francisco to Salt Lake City.
600 *Censorship*, Taro Katayama, Charles Kikuchi, et al, pp. 9-10, JERS: 16:457.
601 *Tanforan Totalizer*, Issue 4, June 6, 1942, p. 5; *Diary*, Earle T. Yusa, JERS: 17:523-17:530.
602 Mine Okubo: *Citizen 13660*, New York: Columbia University Press, [3]1983, pp. 98-100; *Diary*, Ben Iijima, August 2, 1942, JERS: 17:433; ibid., JERS: 17:441; *Diary*, B., p. 68, August 2, 1942, JERS: 16:209.

because they contained "too many figures."[603] The underlying reason was, presumably, that the camp director feared getting accused of wasting Army resources. Although the *Totalizer* staff resented the abridgement of their First Amendment rights, one editor cogently argued that in this case censorship might even be to the advantage of the inmates because it foreclosed denunciations by outside pressure groups, which would frown upon anything that comforted the incarcerated. As he put it: "The information in the hands of some perverted party on the outside might mean not only the finale of this lake, but of all such creations of diversion in the future."[604]

While the above examples reflect the administration's concerns with the internal situation, political issues, and outside opinion, some instances of censorship were outright Orwellian: When a girl, asked what her prospective husband should be like, stated that she didn't "mind if he runs around a little," George Greene censored the line because "this is bad for morals."[605] Another time Greene made the *Totalizer* staff eliminate Kotex from the center store items list because "it was not in good taste."[606] In the same issue, Greene deleted a statement concerning work in the sugar beet fields ("It's better for us to work hard than to stay here and be idle") because he "didn't like the idea that people were idle here." The editors concluded: "We just couldn't say anything."[607]

Finally, the camp administrators exercised censorship to minimize reference to Japanese culture in the *Totalizer*. A fine example for this is Charles Kikuchi's article on the pros and cons of *kifo*. George Greene, to whom the article was first submitted, inquired about the meaning of *kifo*. Kikuchi explained that *kifo* referred to the Japanese customs of honoring certain working groups by collecting cash donations for them. After consulting his boss, Greene stated that the word was not to be used because it was Japanese, adding that from now on no Japanese terms were to be used in the paper. Kikuchi insisted that certain words had no literal translation but it was to no avail. He noted in his diary: "They [are] gradually reaching the point of silliness in the censorship of the camp paper. This means we can't use 'Nisei' any more!"[608]

The rule that no Japanese words were to be used was the only rule the administration clearly stated. The *Totalizer* staff repeatedly tried to make Frank Davis lay down what he deemed permissible, and what not, because the editors preferred a clear-cut censorship policy to arbitrary censorship. The issue was brought up during a meeting with the evacuee Advisory Council but Davis made clear that there was to be only one rule: "Every information you want to issue you should write it out and have it signed by me."[609] In short, Davis rejected a bilateral agreement that would curb his authority. For some time the *Totalizer* staff sent old articles for re-checking to make the censors tired of proof-reading, but

603 *Censorship*, Taro Katayama, Charles Kikuchi, et al, p. 12, JERS: 16:458.
604 Ibid., pp. 12-13, JERS: 16:458-459.
605 Ibid., p. 3, JERS: 16:454.
606 Ibid., p. 2, JERS: 16:453.
607 Ibid., p. 4, JERS: 16:454.
608 Ibid., p. 10, JERS: 16:457.
609 *Minutes of the Advisory Council*, p. 4, July 7, 1942, JERS: 14:399.

as that delayed the clearance of needed material, they gave up the practice.[610] Ultimately, however, the administration's tight grip on the *Totalizer* did little, if anything, to prevent the evacuees from having dissenting thoughts, and from discussing them. Tanforan's setup – a small compound cramped with people – made face-to-face communication the primary mode of disseminating information and exchanging opinions. Hence, the *Totalizer* is less a "mirror [of the] whole community life,"[611] as the Army claimed, but rather a document that explains how the inmates made sense of their captivity.

Despite numerous clashes with the administration, the evacuee editors did not give up on the *Totalizer* although they contemplated to suspend the paper more than once during its nineteen issues. In the end they agreed that the benefit for their community outweighed their frustrations about administrative arbitrariness. That there were still numerous instances of censorship is remarkable because the editors exercised rigorous self-censorship. As we have seen, the Totalizer staff avoided topics that could stir up arguments, stressed patriotism to the United States, and gave only little space to Japanese activities such as *Bon Odori* and *Sumo*.[612] As an editor admitted, "we paint a bright picture of things inadvertently."[613]

Surely, part of this editorial restraint must be contributed to the administration's arbitrary censorship. Very often censorship was exercised with no apparent reason, which made the editors always feel uneasy about the prospect of their stories. In addition, the editors were well aware that the administration would cut down anything controversial. For example, when during one night shots were heard and rumors about an escape spread, the *Totalizer* staff "did not even attempt to bring the story because it would be censored."[614]

However, the editors also actively participated in what Raymond Okamura termed a "semantic conspiracy" of the authorities.[615] That is, evacuees willingly perpetuated the distortions of their keepers and repeatedly added their own euphemisms.[616] The earlier mentioned letter demanding to "write more about pleasant things" points towards the editors' predicament. On the one hand they did not like "the idea [of] putting out a paper all 'sweet coated' as if everything is running smoothly."[617] On the other hand they acknowledged that the *Totalizer* "does serve a certain purpose in the morale-

610 Modell (ed.): *Kikuchi Diary*, p. 173.
611 U.S. Army: *Final Report*, p. 213.
612 The *Bon Odori* festival for example, which was a major event in camp, received scant attention because the most of the *Totalizer* editors agreed that it was "not a good time to stress Japanese culture," fearing that Japanese activities would fuel the prejudice that they were unassimable. See Modell (ed.): *Kikuchi Diary*, p. 182.
613 Modell (ed.): *Kikuchi Diary*, p. 156.
614 Ibid., pp. 86-87.
615 Raymond Y. Okamura: "The American Concentration Camps: A Cover-up Through Euphemistic Terminology," *Journal of Ethnic Studies* Vol. 10 (1982), p. 101.
616 The term "Shangri-la," for example, was a euphemism introduced in issue 9, p. 8. In fact, *Totalizer* columns used a more euphemistic vocabulary than administrative announcements. For example, the editors almost always wrote about the *residents of Tanforan* while the administration used *evacuees* in its bulletins.
617 Modell (ed.): *Kikuchi Diary*, p. 132.

building."[618] In the end, the *Totalizer* staff decided to portray a normal community because they realized that the illusion of normality provided a protective façade that extenuated the harshness of a bleak reality.

Hence, prisoners and keepers shared the goal of promulgating normality and keeping morale high. Furthermore, both sides recognized the crucial role of the paper in disseminating information and decreasing misunderstandings. Both sides wanted Tanforan to run smoothly, to keep mischief, rumors and disorder at the lowest possible level. For many evacuees the orderly conduct was a matter of patriotism, for others it was simply a matter of dignity. The administration, on the other side, understood that the evacuees could be administrated best when they were content. Tanforan's custodians had no interest to "let 'em be pinched, hurt, hungry and dead up against it," as some tribunes of popular opinion demanded.[619] They knew that a happy camp, even the illusion thereof, was a critical means of control.

618 Ibid., p. 156.
619 *San Francisco Examiner*, January 29, 1942.

8 – The Struggle for Self-Government

> *There is quite a bit of undercurrent restlessness and discontent which might flare up at any moment if given half a chance. The recent election showed that people were really wanting a chance to open their mouth and shoot the works.*
>
> – Anonymous JERS Researcher[620]

> *Ghandi was arrested yesterday in India and T.S. said that J.H. should lead the movement for passive resistance here.*
>
> – Charles Kikuchi[621]

Like almost every feature of Tanforan, self-government was a highly ambiguous matter. This ambiguity was rooted in the very nature of the evacuation program: The WCCA (and later the WRA) deemed some self-governing experience necessary because the premise of relocation was couched in terms of "teaching democracy" to these allegedly alien people.[622] To introduce some form of self-government was also feasible because participation by the inmates would make running the camps easier, and because the promulgation of self-government served the propaganda effort. In spite of these apparent benefits, however, the Army never authorized real self-government out of fear to lose control of the camps. This chapter traces the development of self-government in Tanforan in order to elucidate patterns of interaction between custodians and inmates, to discuss factional conflicts, and to account for the rise of a community identity.

Initially, the Army left the issue completely to the Assembly Centers' discretion; the WCCA's *Operation Manual* for Assembly Centers contained no regulations whatsoever regarding self-government.[623] In Tanforan, this loophole set the path for a liberal policy: William Lawson, Tanforan's first camp director, declared in the first *Totalizer* issue: "It will be the policy of the management to make this community as self-governing as possible."[624] On May 5, Lawson invited the house managers into his office and explained that he wanted a feedback from each part of the camp. He divided Tanforan into five precincts and asked the house managers to assign one evacuee per district for regular meetings with the administration. Following an informal election among the house managers, each precinct determined one representative. Together they formed a temporary council.[625]

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620 *Religion*, JERS: 16:277.
621 John Modell (ed.): *The Kikuchi Diary. Chronicle from an American Concentration Camp: The Tanforan Journals of Charles Kikuchi*, Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1973, p. 218.
622 Sandra C. Taylor: *Jewel of the Desert: Japanese American Internment at Topaz*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993, p. 77.
623 There are some indirect references, though. It is stated, for instance, that the Internal Police was to attend all meetings concerned with self-government. See Wartime Civil Control Administration: *Concentration Camp U.S.A. Regulations. July 18, 1942*, San Mateo: Japanese American Curriculum Project, 1973, p. 14 (WCCA: *Operation Manual*, XXXV).
624 *Tanforan Totalizer*, Issue 1, May 15, 1942, p. 1.
625 *Selection of the Temporary Council*, Earle T. Yusa, JERS: 16:496; *Politics*, Michio Kunitani, JERS: 16:375. The five councilmen were Tad Fujita, Henry Takahashi, Michio Nakajima, Aki Moriwaki, and Kenji Fujii.

However, the evacuees disliked the temporary council from the very beginning. A JERS study described it as "passive," and complained that the councilmen "seldom had the nerve to stand up for their rights."[626] After one week two members resigned, and the others were under constant criticism because they could not bring about results quickly enough. Furthermore, the evacuees objected to the arrangement because the temporary councilmen had not been directly elected by the entire population.[627]

Lawson understood that a representative body was necessary to stabilize relations between the administration and the incarcerated. Therefore, he asked the evacuees to work out regulations for general elections, suggesting that Issei and Nisei should be eligible to vote, while only U.S. citizens could be allowed to hold an office.[628]

However, after five weeks in office William Lawson was called back to his former position as State Administrator of the WPA of Northern California. His resignation as camp director postponed the elections because it took over a week until his successor was made known. Finally, on June 4, it was announced that his assistant, Frank Davis, was to take his post. The departure of Lawson marked a drastic change in leadership. A majority of evacuees regretted to see Lawson go because he had been overwhelmingly popular. Those who worked under him described him as a charismatic, practical and tactful politician, "mild mannered, […] with a willing ear to suggestions which made him well-liked by both Caucasian and evacuee employees."[629] Frank Davis, in contrast, had the reputation of being a "gruff individual with no showmanship, nor desire for popularity."[630] Already as assistant camp director he got criticized for his uncooperative attitude and for his indifference towards the evacuees.[631] Charles Kikuchi called Davis "a poor choice because everyone remarks that he is curt and sort of sneers down on the Japanese."[632]Another inmate noted after an encounter with Davis:

> He's about five feet and ten or eleven inches, ruddy and red cheeks, light brown hair, blue eyes, fairly rotund around the waist, and was dressed in a tan suit. He had a very amiable face, a very tender one – as though he had been born with a silver spoon in his mouth.[633]

Although Frank Davis temporized the election of a representative Advisory Council, he finally agreed to the election regulations which the evacuees and Lawson had already set. On June 6 the *Tanforan Totalizer* announced that on June 16 there was to be the general election of a five-member Advisory Council. The right to vote was conferred to all evacuees who were at least 21 years of age, while councilmen had to be 25 years of age and citizens of the United States.[634]

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626 *The First Month at Tanforan. A Preliminary Report*, Tamotsu Shibutani, Haruo Najima, Tomiko Shibutani, p. 54, JERS: 16:420.
627 Modell (ed.): *Kikuchi Diary*, p. 105; *Selection of the Temporary Council*, Earle T. Yusa, JERS: 16:497-498.
628 *First Month*, Shibutani, Najima, Shibutani, pp. 54-55, JERS: 16:420-421; Taylor: *Jewel of the Desert,* pp. 77-78.
629 While Lawson held one staff meeting every weekday, Davis held only one in his four months as camp director. See *Administrative Personalities*, p. 9, JERS: 16:332.
630 *Administrative Personalities*, p. 10, JERS: 16:333.
631 Ibid., p. 10, JERS: 16:333.
632 Modell (ed.): *Kikuchi Diary*, p. 107.
633 *Diary*, Ben Iijima, July 4, 1942, JERS: 17:402.
634 *Tanforan Totalizer*, Issue 4, June 6, 1942, p. 1; *Politics*, Michio Kunitani, JERS: 16:376.

No information was given pertaining to the powers of the Advisory Council, but nonetheless there was widespread enthusiasm when the definite date for the general election was finally announced. For the Issei this was the first opportunity to vote in the United States, while the Nisei could for the first time compete for positions of prestige. Moreover, the majority of evacuees considered elections as an opportunity to lend more authority to their demands. As elections approached, a JERS study noted that there was a feeling "that the residents ought to fight for their rights and stop boot-licking the administration and begin demanding things that are rightfully theirs."[635] In this tensed and emotional atmosphere, political and religious groups realigned themselves along issues that were of immediate concern to the incarcerated.[636] With some abstraction we can distinguish two main currents that emerged in the weeks preceding the election.

One current was headed by a cadre of JACL members. This inner circle of JACLers promoted the JACL "party line," issued by the their headquarters in Salt Lake City, advocating a policy of cooperation at all costs and demanding unquestioned subordination to Army authorities. Furthermore, they disavowed Japanese culture, including its evidently apolitical customs. Lastly, like the majority of Nisei they were super patriotic.[637]

By sheer numbers of membership the JACL formed the largest single body in the camp, with almost every full-aged Nisei claiming membership.[638] However not everybody who was a JACL member actively promoted the JACL's policies. What antagonized many inmates was the JACLers' elitism, particularly their habit to meet secretly among themselves, which lead to the accusation that "as far as their own practices go, there is no semblance of democratic rule in the group."[639] Furthermore, an increasing number of Nisei – while sharing the JACLers' super patriotism to the United States and their rejection of Japanese traditions – felt increasingly estranged by the JACL's policy of submissiveness. The following quote is characteristic of the preoccupations many Nisei had with the JACL's hardliners:

> They are still yelping, "We will cooperate," and they don't think that the Young Demos or any individuals should make an issue over civil rights at a time like this. This is an extremely shortsighted approach if ever there was one. […] The JACL will probably proclaim "we are loyal" and wave the flag and let is go at that.[640]

Since most of the JERS researchers belonged to the leftist faction, almost all sources on the JACL leadership are biased, that is, dismissive and disdainful in tone. However, the above-mentioned points of criticism were brought up by inmates regardless of political affiliation.

The other main current might be called, as Roger Daniels suggested, the "left-wing"

635 Ibid., p. 57, JERS: 16:422.
636 *First Month*, Shibutani, Najima, Shibutani, pp. 42-44, JERS: 16:414-415.
637 However, during incarceration their patriotism "consisted largely of supporting flag raising ceremonies and advocating the singing of national anthems." *First Month*, Shibutani, Najima, Shibutani, pp. 59-61, JERS: 16:423-424.
638 Following the attack at Pearl Harbor almost all Nisei that had not registered so far signed in, raising JACL membership number to roughly 60,000.
639 *Report on Social Morphology*, JERS: 16:149.
640 Modell (ed.): *Kikuchi Diary*, p. 88.

opposition.[641] Frequently just titled "radicals," they comprised the whole gamut of non-conservative factions, from socialists to progressives and from anarchists to liberals. Politically most active in this spectrum were the Young Democrats.[642] Though the Young Democrats were not numerous, counting maybe fifteen members, they had an influence far beyond their numbers.[643] Most were acquainted with the writings of Marx and Lenin, but usually they used Marxian concepts to make fun of each other. Only a few of the Young Democrats had been Communist Party members, and they were inactive because the Party had expelled them for their ethnicity. The diversity of the left opposition group is reflected by the newspapers they read: *The New Republic* was the most popular text among Young Democrats, whereas others preferred *The New Masses* or the San Francisco progressive newspaper *People's World*.[644]

While the JACL hardliners were seclusive, elitist and homogeneous, the left opposition was diverse, including former JACL leaders who were ostracized for speaking up against evacuation. The radicals welcomed everybody in their meetings and showered newcomers with attention in order to covert them. In at least one respect the leftist faction and JACLers shared common ground: Both were pathetically eager to show their loyalty to the United States. However, radicals considered World War II not merely as a military struggle between Axis and Allies nations, but as a conflict between fascist and democratic powers that existed also within the United States. Consequently, radicals claimed that those who had promoted their incarceration adhered to the same principles as Mussolini and his fascist followers. Moreover, the left opposition distinguished itself from the JACLers by considering it to be their right and duty to question the judgment of Caucasian authorities whenever they felt treated unjustly.[645]

The most active members of both groups were Nisei, but we shall see later that the left opposition opened up to political participation by the first generation. What made the first generation critical in the election was their numerical superiority: eligible Issei outvoted eligible Nisei 3:1.[646] This constellation complicated electioneering for both the JACLers and the left opposition because the Issei were biased towards both groups. Particularly the left opposition faced prejudices from their parent generation: Anti-communist propaganda belonged to the staple of the Japanese immigrant press since the Russo-Japanese War, and although the radicals were not communist, some sympathized with leftist ideas which made them prone to redbaiting.[647] Furthermore, Issei were at odds with the liberals' life style such as their open-mindedness on the questions of sex relations. Most Issei felt somewhat

641 Roger Daniels: *Concentration Camps: North America. Japanese in the United States and Canada during World War II*, Malabar: Krieger Publishing Company, [4]1993, p. 107.
642 Modell (ed.): *Kikuchi Diary*, p. 161.
643 While the Young Democrats were founded in Oakland, at least half their members were graduates from the University of California at Berkeley. See Taylor: *Jewel of the Desert*, pp. 76-77.
644 *First Month*, Shibutani, Najima, Shibutani, p. 64, JERS: 16:425.
645 Ibid., pp. 61-65, JERS: 16:424-426.
646 *Tanforan Totalizer*, Issue 6, June 20, 1942, p. 1.
647 In addition, many Issei felt affiliated to Germany because Prussian culture was popular in Meiji Japan.

disconcerted that the leftist faction included women in their ranks.[648] In all these respects Issei felt stronger affiliated to the more conservative and sedate JACLers. Yet neither was the first generation kindly disposed toward the JACL. The Issei had not forgotten the JACL's complicity with the FBI in Issei arrests and suspected that the cooperation continued in Tanforan. Moreover, the JACL was reserved for U.S. citizens and sought to minimize cultural links with Japan, while Issei remained strongly affiliated to the country of their birth and youth.

Much of the election's entanglements and turbulence was rooted in the overlapping lines of conflict, between first and second generation, and between orthodox JACLers and the leftist coalition. Yet these tensions must not be seen only in negative terms, as potential for strife, but also as an opportunity to negotiate, to compromise, and to find common goals. In short, the election forced all participants to exchange their views and to rethink their tenets and policies. To illustrate the method and manners of this competition for votes, I will examine election campaigns in two of the five precincts, beginning with a brief survey of the respective candidates.

After this rather lengthy preamble, let us now turn to precinct 1 where three candidates vied for the post of the councilman. I will first give some basic facts on each candidate which most of the voters must have known, either from the *Totalizer* or from hearsay. 34-year-old Toby (Toshimi) Ogawa was married and father of one child. He managed a Japanese firm, located on Grant Ave, trading with oriental art goods and silk materials. A graduate from the University of California, Ogawa was a member of the Japanese Branch of the YMCA board. He frequently contributed to the JACL treasury by membership fees and other donations but took no active role in its politics.[649]

Like Toby Ogawa, Tad Fujita was a married upper-class San Franciscan in his mid-30s, earning well above $100 a month (Fujita ran a goldfish store). Both graduated from Berkeley, both were Protestants and members of the JACL. Both were listed as Republicans in the city voting register.[650] Unlike Ogawa, Fujita had been in the temporary council which associated him – probably for the worse – with the chaotic conditions during the first month.

The youngest of the three candidates in precinct 1 was Yoshio Katayama. A single man aged 28, he claimed to be 32 because he knew that the Issei attached importance to age as an indication of experience. Hailing from Orange County, he had been a patent attorney in Washington, D.C, and only shortly had come to the Bay Area. He was the only Nisei patent attorney in the entire U.S., a fact he frequently pointed out, as he did his high credit rating ($25,000).[651]

To provide a forum for candidates to advertise their policy and vie for votes, camp director Frank Davis permitted each precinct to have one election rally during which Japanese could be

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648 The Nikkei community was infused with patriarchism, probably more than the U.S. society at large. See Mei T. Nakano: *Japanese American Women: Three Generations, 1890-1990*, Berkeley: Mina Press, 1990, pp. 200-202.
649 *Tanforan Politics*, JERS: 16:353-354; Modell (ed.): *Kikuchi Diary*, p. 112.
650 *Tanforan Politics*, JERS: 16:354.
651 *Tanforan Politics*, JERS: 16:355; Modell (ed.): *Kikuchi Diary*, pp. 124-125.

spoken. In precinct 1 the rally was held the Sunday prior to the election, in a barrack otherwise used as Catholic church. 500 persons appeared – there were 779 eligible voters in precinct 1 – filling the barrack to its capacity. Most of the people present were Issei.

A short musical program preceded the meeting and filled the intermissions. Each campaign manager gave a five-minute speech, followed by the candidates with their platform speeches. All introductory speeches were in Japanese language. Toby Ogawa spoke entirely in Japanese although he had little practice in speaking the language. A spectator remarked that "he spoke very crudely, but spoke so earnestly and spoke the thoughts of the people so well that he was well received."[652] He talked about the importance of the community spirit and promised to push the administration for better food as well as services such as a shoe repair shop and a barber. He said that he understood that "Issei wanted more rice, more Japanese food, more freedom in their privileges" and promised to endorse these issues. In between Ogawa's speech, parts of the audience rose on their feet, yelling, clapping, and hollering, evidently ordered to do so by his campaign manager.[653]

Tad Fujita and Yoshio Katayama spoke some Japanese but finished in English. Fujita's speech ran along the same lines as Ogawa's but the audience claimed he appeared less convincing. Also, parts of his speech went by unheard as a parade of his followers passed by outside, ardently beating on garbage cans to attract attention.[654] Katayama mainly tried to capitalize on his profession, pointing out that as a lawyer only he possessed the legal and professional background to properly represent the people.[655]

After the speeches, a question period followed, in which the audience was given a chance to express its opinions. At first the Issei hesitated, fearing that FBI agents were planted in the audience, but after initial hesitations, more and more spoke up.[656] They demanded "more work, more speech liberty and chance to gather together more."[657] Above all, Issei expressed their disappointment at the way their children were treated:

> [The Issei knew they] were aliens, and alien enemies at that, [but] their sons and daughters were part of this soil, and [the Issei had] sacrificed everything they had, their future, their money, their all so that the Nisei would not be treated like they had been treated when they first came here. And after [the Nisei's] deep faith in democracy and the fair treatment and idealism of the American people […] the Nisei are treated like animals, torn from their meager income source, torn from their property, handicapped in schooling, and enclosed within barbed-wire fence.[658]

652 *Tanforan Politics*, JERS: 16:347.
653 Ibid., JERS: 16:349.
654 Ibid., JERS: 16:347.
655 Ibid., JERS: 16:349.
656 After December 7 the Issei had witnessed the internment of many of their friends for minor reasons such as donating to a fund that had its origin in Japan, or for being a member of the Japanese Association of America. Therefore, many Issei feared that FBI agents, operating undercover in Tanforan, would use any pretext to intern them and separate them from their families. According to camp director Davis there were indeed FBI agents in Tanforan, but their main goal was to investigate the gambling problem. See *Minutes of the Advisory Council*, July 17, 1942, JERS: 14:406-407.
657 *Tanforan Politics*, JERS: 16:350.
658 Ibid., JERS: 16:350.

On June 17, election day, each evacuee over 21 could vote, using the meal ticket and family number for verification.[659] After ballots had been counted, Tad Fujita (155 votes) and Yoshio Katayama (85 votes) were soundly defeated by Toby Ogawa (484 votes). Out of 779 eligible voters, 55 percent of whom were Issei, 725 had cast their votes for a record turnout of over 93 percent.[660]

The campaign in precinct 1 was hardly marked by controversial issues. An evacuee wrote in her diary: "How unoriginal the candidates are – they all have the same slogan – 'Equality and Justice for all inhabitants.'"[661] Indeed, Fujita's mantra "To coordinate the interests of the Nisei and Issei residents," did not differ much from Katayama's, "Unity of Issei and Nisei for the benefit of the Japanese," or Ogawa's, "For the people's welfare."[662] Despite the apolitical nature of the election, many Nisei were impressed by their parents' enthusiasm and democratic spirit. Charles Kikuchi, who covered the campaign for the *Totalizer*, wrote:

> It is unfortunate that they were never given citizenship; they would have made damn good citizens, not that they weren't, in spite of discrimination. […] Even if this particular election will not mean too much, it is good for the Issei and a subtle step towards Americanization.[663]

In the absence of truly controversial issues most Issei judged the candidates on criteria such as age, marital status, sincerity and charisma. Professional standing, too, played a role, but since all candidates were respected and successful individuals, the decision was more on character traits.[664] Toby Ogawa knew best how to take advantage of this by frequently appearing together with his attractive wife or having his little daughter carry a sign reading "Vote for daddy."[665] Also, employing social networks from pre-evacuation days proved an essential advantage. Particularly Ogawa was able to mobilize a large numbers of volunteers, influential individuals in the Japanese-American community, which secured his landslide victory.

In precinct 2, electioneering was different in character, taking a course more along the previously mentioned split between of JACL hardliners and the left opposition consisting of progressives and liberals. Two of the three candidates dominated the wrangle. The first candidate who collected 50 signatures and thus qualified for nomination was Henry Takahashi of the "famous Takahashi clan of Berkeley."[666] Aged 38 he was married and had two children. After graduating from the University of California in optometry he became an active JACL member. Following December 7, he actively promoted the JACL's policy of unconditional cooperation. He had the reputation of acting up as the "savior of the Japanese," one of many reasons why he was rather unpopular among Japanese

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659 *Diary*, Doris Hayashi, pp. 69-70, June 16, 1942, JERS: 17:123.
660 *Tanforan Politics*, JERS: 16:252; *Tanforan Totalizer*, Issue 6, June 20, 1942, p. 1.
661 *Diary*, Doris Hayashi, p. 66, June 15, 1942, JERS: 17:121.
662 *Tanforan Totalizer*, Issue 5, June 13, 1942, p. 1.
663 Modell (ed.): *Kikuchi Diary*, p. 123.
664 Precinct 1 housed exclusively family units. As unmarried men were generally not considered true "men," being a husband and father already posed an advantage. For a synopsis of electoral behavior in precinct 1 see *Tanforan Politics*, JERS: 16:348.
665 *Diary*, Doris Hayashi, p. 66, June 15, 1942, JERS: 17:121.
666 *Politics*, Michio Kunitani, JERS: 16:384.

Americans.[667] The Berkeley Methodist Episcopal Church disliked him for dropping out of their church and founding the Berkeley United Church. The liberals, too, held long-standing grudges against Takahashi because of his habit to redbait, that is, taunting and ostracizing the more liberal elements in the JACL as pro-communist.[668]

A caveat must be entered at this point: neither the left-wing opposition nor JACL hardliners were free from name-calling. While JACLers such as Takahashi were infamous for redbaiting anyone who did not stick to the JACL's party line, some radicals were not better, contending:

> The J.A.C.L. is fascist, the administration in Tanforan is fascist, the Army is fascist, the pressure groups are fascist; anyone they dislike is fascist. In fact, anyone who speaks Japanese may be labeled fascist.[669]

Before returning to the main argument it must be said, though, that such excrescence of heated partisanship was largely confined to debates *within* the factions.

As a reaction to the nomination of Henry Takahashi, a pastor from the Oakland United Church initiated a "popular front […] to get Takahashi out."[670] Liberals and progressives soon joined the drive and eventually convinced the United Church to support the nomination of Ernest Satoshi Iiyama, despite his red stigma as a founding member of the Young Democrats. The main argument behind Iiyama's nomination was that as a Kibei he had it easier to attract the Issei's votes. Indeed, the Issei were looking for a candidate who was willing to stand in for their interests because the administration had just enforced the Japanese language ban and, in general, pursued a policy that marginalized the Issei's influence in Tanforan.[671]

Apart from his broad cultural outlook, Iiyama was far from being the ideal candidate in the eyes of traditional Issei. He was eight years junior to the 38-year-old Takahashi and unmarried. Born in the United States he was educated during the 1920s and early 1930s in Japan where he became fluent in Japanese. In Japan he also absorbed leftist ideas, and after his return to the United States he began to associate with the progressive movement. In 1937 he became president of the Young Democrats club. Before that he had worked several years in white-collar jobs to earn enough money to major at the University of California in engineering. Just prior to the evacuation he worked as clerk for Alameda County. While Iiyama was best known as a liberal leader, he was also member of the JACL. He had promoted voluntary evacuation but opposed the JACL on the issue of forced exclusion.[672]

In order to back Iiyama his supporters formed a council. This council was dominated by progressive Issei, old time anarchists, and socialists, some of whom came from Japan as political refugees. Because most of the time they conversed in Japanese the council had to operate

667 Modell (ed.): *Kikuchi Diary*, p. 129.
668 Modell (ed.): *Kikuchi Diary*, pp. 95, 97, 100, 130; *Politics*, Michio Kunitani, JERS: 16:384. Almost every comment I found on Henry Takahashi is derogatory. His arrogance seems to be the main reason. Hostility went so far that some bachelors said they would attack him if he appeared around their barrack. See ibid.
669 *First Month*, Shibutani, Najima, Shibutani, p. 65, JERS: 16:426.
670 *Politics*, Michio Kunitani, JERS: 16:377.
671 Ibid., JERS: 16:377-383; Modell (ed.): *Kikuchi Diary*, p. 130; *Tanforan Totalizer*, Issue 8, July 4, 1942, p. 2.
672 *Politics*, Michio Kunitani, JERS: 16:383.

underground.[673] Some of the progressive Issei were citizens by virtue of their participation in World War I. To this group belonged Guy Uyama, who was made chairmen for Iiyama's campaign. As and American Legionnaire Uyama had taken an active leadership role in the Japanese post in San Francisco and was experienced in democratic procedures and electioneering.[674] Uyama secured a list of all eligible voters in precinct 2, divided the precinct into wards, and assigned one Issei and one Nisei to contact every family unit in order to convince them to vote for Iiyama.

Another prominent and influential supporter of Iiyama's was Chiura Obata, art professor at the University of California, who was on forced sabbatical. Obata supported Iiyama by drawing posters that were then plastered all over Tanforan, including in toilet bowls. In the course of the election candidates reacted to their adversary's slogans. When Takahashi's helpers put up a poster saying "Don't switch horses in mid-stream" (Takahashi was in the temporary council) Iiyama's followers put one up saying: "Why vote for a horse? Vote for a man: Iiyama." In the week prior to the election some mess hall waiters even started wearing placards bearing candidates' slogans until the mess hall managers forbade them to do so.[675]

The much anticipated rally in precinct 2 was the first to be held in Tanforan. The Young Democrats had requested that candidates would hold only short speeches so that the question period could be long. Some 500 people crowded the barrack, mostly Issei, including some evacuees from other precincts. Like in precinct 1, the speeches were rather undistinguished; every candidate promised to work for the welfare of all people.[676] The follow-up discussion went smoothly until an Issei asked why they could only elect and not run for the office. The chairman of the meeting, who had been appointed by Takahashi, answered that everyone would do his best to see that the Issei got a fair hearing. Still, more interjections followed, in which Issei asked why the administration hesitated to give them work, and why they could not hold meetings in Japanese. To the final question Takahashi replied that he would "not tolerate the Japanese language from the Issei" and that he would "force

673 *Politics*, Michio Kunitani, JERS: 16:383. The progressive Issei were for some reason concentrated in precinct 2. To the colorful personalities belonged Hoko Ikeda, who – with his Lenin like appearance, including a goatee – was arguably the most picturesque figure in the whole campaign. Prior to evacuation he was a resident of Redwood City and a frequent contributor to *Doho*, the organ of the Japanese Communist Party of the United States. A fellow inmate described him as looking "like a typical radical agitator as depicted by the Hearst press. He has a commanding voice and manner and if he were able to speak English, he would put Harry Bridges to shame." (*Politics*, Michio Kunitani, JERS: 16:388.) Issei anarchist in the Bay Area had a long tradition, reaching back to the formation of the Social Revolutionary Party in 1906. Another outstanding individual was Ichiro Akiya who took over the task of winning the Kibei vote. A Kibei himself he spoke excellently English and Japanese. He returned to the United States in the early 1930s and belonged to those Kibei who were infused with Marxist philosophy in Japan. Marxism was popular among intellectuals in Japan in the 1920s and early 1930s, and many Kibei, who returned to America, continued their activities in their own clubs. In fact, Kibei constituted the backbone of the Japanese Communist Party in the United States. In contrast, those Kibei who returned from Japan after 1935 tended to be pro-fascist. See ibid., JERS: 16:388-389; Karl G. Yoneda: *Ganbatte. Sixty-Year Struggle of a Kibei Worker*, Los Angeles: Resource Development and Publications, Asian American Studies Center UCLA, 1983; Yuji Ichioka: "A Buried Past: Early Issei Socialists and the Japanese Community" *Amerasia Journal* Vol. 1 (1971), pp. 1-25.
674 Modell (ed.): *Kikuchi Diary*, pp. 130-131.
675 Ibid., pp. 122-124; *Politics*, Michio Kunitani, JERS: 16:386.
676 Iiyama's slogan was "Equal rights, equal opportunities and equal representation for all," while Takahashi promised to "Fight for our just rights." *Tanforan Totalizer*, Issue 5, June 13, 1942, p. 1.

them to learn English."[677]

At that point the Issei were thoroughly aroused. The chairman decided to adjourn the meeting ten minutes early, which some people construed as an abridgement of their freedom of speech, getting furious to the point where they wanted to assault the chairmen. When the people began to file out, Hoko Ikeda, an Issei with a Lenin-like appearance, jumped on the stairs outside of the building and began to talk Japanese. The Nisei were afraid that the Internal Police might show up and that dire consequences would follow since nine o'clock was the deadline for all meetings in Tanforan. The Issei, however, lingered to listen. Ikeda polemized for several minutes until Iiyama, who was still in the barrack, rushed out to stop the harangue. Iiyama addressed the crowd in a calm voice and told the people that this kind of demonstration was not conductive to anything but drawing more restrictions from the administration. The Issei responded by giving him a rousing cheer. After Iiyama had told them to walk home quietly Ikeda stepped up once more and yelled "Iiyama banzai!" Echoing the call the crowd began to disperse.[678]

In sum, the election in precinct 2 was the most emotional in all of Tanforan. After the ballots had been counted, Iiyama had won by a margin of 204 votes to his opponent Takahashi.[679] The aggressive electioneering had paid off. Some inmates voted for him simply because he was the most proactive candidate and had the most spectacular campaign. Others supported Iiyama on the premise of his political bent. Most Issei, however, voted for Iiyama because he appeared more truthful and convincing than Takahashi in promising to vouch for the Issei's rights. Again, as both candidates advocated essentially the same goals, it was primarily Iiyama's charisma – to refer to Max Weber's tripartite classification of authority[680] – that won him the election. Finally, Iiyama relied on a strong social network he had built up in pre-evacuation days, while Takahashi was unpopular within the Japanese-American community long before evacuation.[681]

Despite the emotional character of the campaigns, once the election was over Iiyama struck a conciliatory tone: He asked his supporters to abstain from holding a victory parade because he did not want to antagonize his opponents and harm the spirit of community that he had promised to promote. Iiyama also suggested that members of the temporary council, among them Tad Fujita and Henry Takahashi, ought to be allowed to attend the meetings of the Advisory Council elect. His suggestion

677 *Diary*, Doris Hayashi, pp. 64-65, June 14, 1942, JERS: 17:120-121.
678 *Politics*, Michio Kunitani, JERS: 16:385.
679 *Tanforan Totalizer*, Issue 6, June 20, 1942, p. 1.
680 Max Weber defined charismatic authority as power legitimized on the basis of a leader's exceptional personal qualities or the demonstration of extraordinary insight and accomplishment, which inspire loyalty from his followers. Weber saw charismatic authority not so much as character traits of the charismatic leader, but as a relationship between the leader and his followers. While Iiyama lacked outstanding accomplishments, sources clearly suggest that he was both easy-going and respectful, appealing to Nisei and Issei likewise. (The other two forms of authority are traditional authority and rational-legal authority.) See Max Weber: *Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft: Grundriss der verstehenden Soziologie*, Tübingen: Mohr-Siebeck, ^{5}2002, pp. 140-148.
681 Modell (ed.): *Kikuchi Diary*, p. 131;

was adopted.[682]

In Tanforan as a whole, over 80 percent of the eligible voters turned out.[683] Three of the five councilmen were progressives, two of them Nisei and one Kibei (Iiyama). One more Kibei was described as "sort of reactionary." The only councilmen who had run on the JACL ticket came from the fifth precinct.[684] In the final analysis, political ideology played only a minor role in Tanforan's election. What counted most was the ability to appeal to the whole of the community. Fluency in English and Japanese, integrity, charisma, and social networks were the imperative ingredients to success. The political bent was secondary, albeit there was a clear tendency that liberal candidates were more successful than conservatives in garnering votes of the Issei. As a result of the election, the administration faced a self-confident council, willing to vouch for the interests of all people. Moreover, the council was poised to challenge the administration's policy of excluding the Issei from the organization of the camp, opposing the administration's view of the Issei as "hopeless cases" and as a threat to the Americanization of the Nisei.[685] Finally, the election brought the inmates closer together. This is not to say that all differences between Issei and Nisei dissolved, but the election clearly fostered a greater tolerance on both sides.

If Frank Davis was upset with the election result he did not show it. During the first meeting of the Advisory Council, two days after its election, Davis stated that he was very much pleased with the conduct of the election and with the situation in Tanforan as a whole.[686] Three days later, on June 22, the Advisory Council reconvened to discuss how to proceed. First point on the agenda was the meeting time of the council. Davis suggested that it should convene regularly, "that means […] about every two weeks."[687] Tad Fujita argued that once a week would be more appropriate to cope with the pile of pressing issues. Without awaiting Davis' response, Fujita proposed to vote on it, and all councilmen immediately raised their hands. The protocol states that Fujita's notion was unanimously accepted.[688] After this ad-hoc expression – and assertion – of the council's will, the councilmen brought forward the concerns of their voters, which took up the remainder of the meeting. In fact, the discussion of everyday matters was to take up the bulk of the council's time in all sessions. It typically ran like this:

> Iiyama: Are Japanese instruments allowed? There has been an instance when one person was told to stop.
> Ogawa: If the instrument is accompanied by a song?
> Davis: Get your Music Department to send out the songs, and we'll get them translated, and

682 Ibid., pp. 130-131; *Minutes of the Advisory Council*, June 19, 1942, JERS: 14:380.
683 *Tanforan Totalizer*, Issue 6, June 20, 1942, p. 1. The winners were Toshimi Ogawa, Ernest Satoshi Iiyama, Frank Yamasaki, Albert Kosakura, Vernon Ichisaka.
684 Modell (ed.): *Kikuchi Diary*, p. 132.
685 Ibid., p. 164.
686 *Minutes of the Advisory Council*, June 19, 1942, JERS: 14:380.
687 Ibid., June 22, 1942, JERS: 14:383.
688 Ibid.

> then we'll use them. […]
> Takahashi: When are the barber shops going to start?
> Davis: Aren't they started yet?
> Takahashi: And the laundry.
> Yamasaki: Are the barbers going to be put on the pay roll?
> Takahashi: What about the equipment?
> Davis: We did get a line on dental chairs. There's no way of getting equipment without getting a bid.[689]

The barrage of questions went on: Had anything been done about the shoe repair business? Who takes care of these truck drivers? When are the scrip books to be distributed? Are there allowances for councilmen? Anything new on the canteen? When will the Army issue Japanese translations of the administration's bulletins?[690] The six pages of typewritten protocol read more like a grilling of the camp director. Henceforward Davis brought at least one more Caucasian to the meetings to share the pressure of the councilmen. In return, to mount more pressure and to visualize the growth of undone business, the councilmen started to hand Davis a list with discussion points in advance of each meeting. This list eventually featured about ten points of "old business" and some twenty points regarding "new business" (see Appendix III).[691]

The sheer mass of questions has several ramifications. First, it denotes that the council was kept busy regulating everyday needs, which left them little time to press ahead with self-government. Second, it demonstrates the council's dependence on Davis' agreement on even the most mundane issues. Third, it shows that in many issues Davis was handicapped because he needed the approval of the WCCA headquarters in San Francisco.[692] (However, the requirement of the Army's consent often served Davis as a pretext to dodge issues he felt uncomfortable with.)

A closer look at the Advisory Council's protocols reveals that the administration was principally opposed to freedom of speech and freedom of assembly: When the councilmen asked Davis under which conditions people could gather without being suspected of holding a "secret meeting,"[693] he stated that it depended on "the way they were acting."[694] When asked if it would be acceptable when an inmate received visitors in his apartment who had a common interest in poems, Davis replied that the person ought to notify his house manager, who would then notify the chief of the Internal Police, who in turn would notify his men of the meeting being held.[695] Davis' reluctance to loose his grip on the control of social activities was rooted in his underlying belief that the inmates, in

689 Ibid., JERS: 14:382-383.
690 Ibid., JERS: 14:383-384.
691 *Agenda with Mr. Davis*, July 22, 1942, JERS: 14:413.
692 For example, the administration depended on the Army's approval regarding the translation of bulletins into Japanese. Only bulletins dealing with fire hazard, sanitation and police regulations could be translated without the consent of the WCCA headquarters in San Francisco. See *Minutes of the Advisory Council*, July 22, 1942, JERS: 14:414.
693 The WCCA's *Center Regulations* forbid secret meetings but were unclear as to what "secret" meant: "Evacuees are prohibited from organizing, participating in or being members of any secret clubs, organization (except Boy Scout activities), association or combination of more than one individual. […] Meetings for the purpose of discussing the war or any international problems are not authorized." WCCA: *Concentration Camp U.S.A. Regulations*, p. 14 (WCCA: *Operation Manual*, Section XXV).
694 *Minutes of the Constitutional Meeting*, July 11, 1942, JERS: 14:401.
695 Ibid.

particular the Issei, could not be trusted. However, Davis was receptive to most of the other concerns the council brought forward. For instance, when evacuees complained that drunken soldiers bothered them, Davis immediately took care of the matter.[696]

Apart from regulating every day matters, the council mediated in conflicts between the community and the camp administration. One issue that tested the council's role as negotiator was the gambling problem. Especially the Issei, who had no regular work, gambled, but many Nisei were equally prone to getting addicted to the "poker mania."[697] Initially, the camp administration appealed to the house managers to prevent gambling – with little results, as many house managers gambled themselves. In mid-May, the Internal Police raided the men's dormitory and took 88 men to the San Mateo jail for violating the state gambling laws.[698] However, gambling continued, albeit more often with chips instead of money. As long as Jerry Easterbrooks headed the Internal Police, his men abstained from cutting down on gambling. Easterbrooks knew that the Issei had few options to pass time, and he saw no harm done as long as no trouble arouse.[699] Only the wives of those who gambled away large sums of money denounced gambling openly. Most of the gamblers claimed they had "lost the money" but everybody looked through their excuses. As Ben Iijima observed:

> A lot of this losing money belts is just poppycock. Men lose their money gambling and then they say they lost the currency at the showers in explaining the loss to their wives.[700]

The situation changed when Easterbrooks was replaced. The new police chief convinced Davis that the administration needed to crack down on gambling. On July 17, without giving the councilmen advance notice, Davis announced that he had ordered the FBI to investigate the gambling problem and intended to take punitive measures:

> I've got to take disciplinary action against the [gamblers]. They've had their chance. I've talked to them, you've talked to them, I've talked to them again. It's open season on gamblers. We're going to get them. [Listing six names.] You can blame those men who for the rules we are going to get now. I should have seized those chips, cards, all along.[701]

After Davis had finished his accusations, Toby Ogawa defended the Advisory Council by saying that the council never had been informed of the administration's concern about gambling. He assured Davis that the councilmen would have taken care of the problem if they had known the administration was bothered by it. After a heated discussion, Davis admitted that there "has been a misunderstanding." He agreed that the councilmen should first have the opportunity to solve the gambling problem themselves, and only if they failed, he would have the FBI intervene and impose stricter rules. Ogawa concluded: "Now that we got this information, we can stamp it out."[702] The

696 Modell (ed.): *Kikuchi Diary*, p. 196.
697 *Diary*, Ben Iijima, July 5, 1942, JERS: 17:402; Modell (ed.): *Kikuchi Diary*, p. 85.
698 *First Month*, Shibutani, Najima, Shibutani, pp. 74-75, JERS: 16:430-431; Modell (ed.): *Kikuchi Diary*, p. 87.
699 Modell (ed.): *Kikuchi Diary*, pp. 98-99.
700 *Diary*, Ben Iijima, July 12, 1942, JERS: 17:424. See also *Diary*, B., July 20, 1942: JERS: 16:200; *Field Work Report*, Mas Wakai, June 8, 1942, JERS: 14:363; Modell (ed.): Kikuchi Diary, pp. 87, 196, 203; Mine Okubo: *Citizen 13660*, New York: Columbia University Press, [3]1983, p. 103.
701 *Minutes of the Advisory Council*, July 17, 1942, JERS: 14:406-407.
702 Ibid., JERS: 14:408.

meeting ended with mutual apologies for the misunderstandings, and with promises to cooperate better in the future. The following week the councilmen had all the known gamblers come into their session and made them "promise to behave or else."[703] Since then gambling did not reappear in any discussion with the camp director.

Another case requiring the arbitration of the council was the case of the 21-year-old Kenji Ota,[704] an evacuee ambulance driver who was caught speeding (the speed limit in Tanforan was 15 mph). Ota was on the way to an emergency call when a Caucasian policeman signaled him to stop. Ota first ignored him, but on his way back he stopped to face the angered policeman. In the ensuing argument the driver accused the officer of "neglecting his duty by sitting around on his ass […]." When Davis got to know about the incident he ordered Ota to be transferred to another camp for disciplinary reasons. Ota first refused to apologize for speaking out, but he was worried about his mother who was seriously ill, and who would be on her own if he left Tanforan. Thus, eventually he apologized. However, Davis remained unmoved. To help the Nisei, his friends sent around a petition asking for a fair hearing but Davis still refused to budge. Finally, Ota's friends asked the Advisory Council to put in a good word for the driver.[705]

Davis' reluctance to yield to was rather untypical for him. Whatever his rationale, the response must have caught the camp director by surprise: The incident spread like a wildfire, and after a week it was in everybody's mouth (although the *Totalizer* did not report on it). Doris Hayashi, for example, reflected on the event in her diary:

> It's really aggravating when the officials lose their tempers so easily and won't take any criticism […]. Of course, [Ota] was very "sassy" but the administration shouldn't judge immediately. (*After all, this isn't the army.*)[706] (emphasis added)

The Berkeley YWCA board discussed the issue in their weekly gabfest:

> First of all, we discussed the limitations of the administration here […]. What aggravates us most is the fact that a number of officials take criticisms, and remarks personally, and extend it on to the official records – that is, if they don't like someone, or have some disagreement with them, they put them on the black list and either refuse to give them further employment (as the employment director), or to give them any further concessions. We discussed the case of the ambulance driver who was fired for "insolence, insubordination, and derogatory remarks against the administration." These remarks were to follow him to relocation. […] All he said was that this was a "dirty place," and that there was a lot of red tape – so that he didn't mind leaving. Even a comment made unthinkingly is considered as incriminating evidence, and a person is not given a fair hearing, or given another chance. Moreover, they don't seem to stand for any comments etc. They seem to delight in gloating over the fact that we are under military control, and that they themselves can't be sued by us.[707]

By the time the matter was brought before Davis, the incident had gained symbolic prominence. The case of the outspoken ambulance driver epitomized for many evacuees the little insults and injustices

703 Modell (ed.): *Kikuchi Diary*, p. 207.
704 The name has been changed as the documents regarding the case are confidential and names cannot be made public until 2015.
705 Modell (ed.): *Kikuchi Diary*, pp. 194-195.
706 *Diary*, Doris Hayashi, p. 163, July 16, 1942, JERS: 17:171.
707 *Discussions*, Doris Hayashi, p. 32, July 28, 1942, 16:259.

they experienced daily. The resulting discontent surely had some effect on the camp director when the councilmen confronted him on the issue. The council urged Davis not to ship the ambulance driver to another camp. Chairman Toby Ogawa apologized for Ota's behavior and stressed that the driver had apologized to the policeman. Although at first Davis gave himself stubborn, eventually a compromise was reached: Ota was not allowed to drive any more, but he could stay in Tanforan, and he was not blacklisted either. Further, Davis also guaranteed that no case histories were to be sent to the WRA.[708]

Ota's case and the gambling problem demonstrate that the Advisory Council successfully asserted evacuee interest and, in general, strived for autonomy from administrative rule. In addition, the council sorted out numerous smaller conflicts and coordinated efforts to improve Tanforan's setup: It helped to settle the maintenance strike and clarified various camp regulations. It cooperated with the Internal Police and house managers on regulations such as phonograph record collecting. It pushed through the laundry service, as well as the radio and watch repairing service. A shoe repair shop was opened, as well as a barbershop. It arranged funeral services and had streetlights put up. Last but not least, it established the Personal Aid Bureau to assist the Issei in personal matters, mainly by helping them with their correspondence to the outside.[709]

Apart from mediating and serving the physical needs of the inmates, the Advisory Council sought to extend self-government. To understand how self-government developed, we need to consider events that took place before the election of the Advisory Council. On May 31, the chief of the Reception Center Division (a section of the WCCA) sent a memorandum to the director of each Assembly Center marked "confidential," in which he expressed "grave concern" that some councils were attempting to develop real self-government. He stated: "It has never been my intention that these representatives should function in any way other than strictly advisory." He warned the camp directors to guard against attempts by councils to take over administrative or directorate responsibility.[710]

In spite of this memorandum, Davis stated during the first Advisory Council meeting, on June 19, that the council was "to establish a form of representative government in this center."[711] Hence, although Davis knew that the Army was against self-government, he supported the formation of an evacuee council, knowing that the notion of self-government was critical to win the cooperation of the camp population. We must assume, however, that Davis was aware from the very beginning that a representative evacuee government would only be privileged to advise him on innocuous topics.

Tanforan's inmates, who did not know of the memorandum, enthusiastically tackled the task to set up their own government. In the weeks following the election of the Advisory Council, each councilman conducted meetings in his precinct in order to select a committee of 10. Together they

708 *Minutes of the Advisory Council*, July 22, 1942, JERS: 14:418; Modell (ed.): *Kikuchi Diary*, pp. 194-195.
709 *Tanforan Totalizer,* Issue 3, May 30, 1942, p. 1; Modell (ed.): *Kikuchi Diary*, pp. 206-207.
710 *R. L. Nicholson to Assembly Center Directors*, May 31, 1942, RG 338. As cited by Taylor: *Jewel of the Desert*, p. 79.
711 *Minutes of the Advisory Council*, June 19, 1942, JERS: 14:380.

formed a Constitutional Committee of 50.[712] (All sessions were supervised by the Internal Police "to see that nothing subversive was said."[713]) This committee drafted a constitution which was confirmed by Davis on July 13. The constitution enfranchised everyone aged twenty-one and older and provided for a Legislative Congress to be composed of members elected from each precinct on the basis of one assemblyman for each 200 residents. The Advisory Council took over the role of the executive branch.[714] By July 25, a total of 80 candidates had been nominated for the 38 offices in Tanforan's Legislative Congress. The election was scheduled for July 28.[715]

The election of the Legislative Congress marked the climax of political activities, but it also a turning point. Starting on July 1, the WCCA issued a series of regulations restricting self-government. First came the announcement that only citizens would be allowed to vote or hold any elective office. In addition, the minimum age for candidates was raised to 23.[716] Both directives were implemented although they contradicted Tanforan's constitution. As the evacuees realized that the authorities considered Tanforan's constitution null and void, many of them questioned the meaning of the election. Only after much prodding by the house managers, 69 percent of the eligible voters turned out, reflecting a visible drop in political interest.[717] The *Tanforan Totalizer* promptly editorialized on the "general apathy of the center's voting element:"

> The temporariness of our stay here does not obviate the very real need we face to become more familiar with the elective process. What our assembly center may or may not be able to do during our residence is beside the point. It is the principle of franchise involved that is important. And it is by this principle that much of our future in the relocation areas will be guided. Let us show less civil lethargy in taking advantage of our absentee voting rights in the coming state primaries.[718]

On the same day, August 1, the WCCA issued a revision of its *Center Regulations* which contained a paragraph stating that "[n]o type of self-government organization is authorized in an assembly center."[719] To preserve the semblance of evacuee participation, the WCCA prescribed rules for the election of an advisory panel. However, the election procedure made clear that the panel had the sole purpose of serving as the administration's mouthpiece: The evacuees were required to nominate 27 persons, from which the camp director was to select a 9-man advisory panel of Nisei and English-speaking Issei, in proportion to the number of Nisei and Issei in the Assembly Center. As each

712 The Constitutional Committee of 50 was dominated by Issei, which demonstrates that at the grass-roots level they remained influential. See Modell (ed.): *Kikuchi Diary*, p. 153.
713 *Diary*, B., p. 20, June 27, 1942, JERS: 16:184; Modell (ed.): *Kikuchi Diary*, p. 153. According to the WCCA's *Center Regulations* the Internal Police was "required to attend all meetings concerned with self-government." WCCA: *Concentration Camp U.S.A. Regulations*, p. 14.
714 *Tanforan Totalizer,* Issue 8, July 4, 1942, pp. 1, 4.
715 *Tanforan Totalizer*, Issue 12, July 25, 1942, p. 1.
716 *Tanforan Totalizer*, Issue 11, July 18, 1942, p. 1.
717 Women outvoted men 51 percent to 49 percent but only one woman was elected into the 38-member congress. Some Issei mistook the election barometer for a weather indicator and wondered that it only registered 60 at a rather warmish day. *Tanforan Totalizer*, Issue 13, August 1, 1942, p. 1; *Diary*, B., p. 60, July 28, 1942, JERS 16:205.
718 *Tanforan Totalizer*, Issue 13, August 1, 1942, p. 6.
719 *WCCA Operation Manual, Supplement No. 8***,** Colonel Bendetsen, August 1, 1942, JERS: 12:303-306; *Diary*, Doris Hayashi, p. 207, July 27, 1942, JERS 17:193.

candidate needed 50 signatures and every evacuee could sign only once, at least 1350 evacuees had to sign petitions just to nominate 27 candidates. Furthermore, the panel could only meet at the camp director's calling, and it was explicitly indicated that it was to act in a purely advisory capacity.[720] In a letter from August 3, Davis informed the Advisory Council (now acting as Executive Council) of its abolishment. It reads:

> In accordance with supplement 8 to the WCCA Operations Manual of the Western Defense Command and the Fourth Army, WCCA, dated August 1, 1942, and received in this office August 3, 1942, the center Executive Council and the Center Congress as well as any and all other activities of the self-governing organization in this center is hereby declared dissolved. […] The employment of all assigned evacuee employees in this center will be terminated as of the close of business today.[721]

In practice, there never was real self-government in Tanforan. Davis constrained the council to administering the day-to-day concerns of the inmates and to advising him on innocuous topics such as recreation, education, religion, health and sanitation. The council was never permitted to sit in the meetings of the administration, and it was technically subservient to the administration.[722] Yet this had been a compromise the evacuees were willing to work with because they had the freedom to negotiate the degree for self-government. The WCCA's advisory panel, however, was simply a farce. It was not representative of the population, and it lacked even the pretense of power. The *Totalizer*, ever eager to appease, commented on the abolishment in its final issue:

> In [August], self-government came to the end of its never too sure course. The Army order of August 3, dissolving all assembly center self-government bodies, came as a coup de grace to waning political interests.[723]

Privately, however, many evacuees reacted embittered.[724] The house managers, who had played a pivotal role in the mobilization of voters during the previous two elections, refused to promote the advisory panel election, considering them a sham. Instead, they boycotted them:

> The general opinion […] was that the whole thing was a joke and an insult to the [house managers]. So in making mess hall announcements, they plan to read it hurriedly in English only and then have quietly spreading the word around that it doesn't mean a thing.[725]

On August 19, three days before the scheduled election, only two candidates had handed in their nomination. This left Davis no choice but to cancel the elections.[726] On August 22, a one-liner in the *Tanforan Totalizer* made his decision public.[727]

The realization that self-government, limited as it was, had been thwarted, had come gradually, by a steady increase of restrictive measures, not as a shock. This was one reason why little protest

720 *Tanforan Totalizer*, Issue 15, August 15, 1942, p. 1; *WCCA Operation Manual, Supplement No. 8*, JERS 12:303-306; Modell (ed.): *Kikuchi Diary*, pp. 216-217.
721 Modell (ed.): *Kikuchi Diary*, p. 206.
722 As Sandra Taylor put it, "the center was a company shop, halfway between a company union and a prison." Taylor: *Jewel of the Desert*, p. 79.
723 *Tanforan Totalizer*, Issue 19, September 12, 1942, p. 19.
724 *Diary*, B., p. 69, August 4, 1942, JERS: 16:210; Modell (ed.): *Kikuchi Diary*, p. 206.
725 Modell (ed.): *Kikuchi Diary*, pp. 217-218.
726 Ibid., p. 230; *Tanforan Totalizer*, Issue 19, September 12, 1942, p. 19.
727 *Tanforan Totalizer*, Issue 16, August 22, 1942, p. 1.

materialized. The other reason was that the interest in self-government had indeed abated, caused by growing evidence at the end of August that relocation was near. The inmates became increasingly occupied with the upcoming move, and those who resented the Army's order, resolved to postpone their resentment and fight it out later:

> J.H. was of the opinion that we should put up a fight now, but the others told him that he would only be jeopardizing his chances by making a "big noise" here when we were only going to be here for another month or so anyway.[728]

That the evacuees retained their spirit of resistance is demonstrated by the following episode: On September 9, 1942, an advance work group of 214 evacuees left Tanforan for the Topaz Relocation Camp to arrange mess facilities.[729] After only four days they went on strike, refusing to work for the Caucasian chief stewards, whom they described as arbitrary and dictatorial. The kitchen workers presented to Topaz' director a plan that would turn over the management of the kitchens and mess halls to the evacuees. The director backed this plan, rebuked the Caucasian stewards, and appointed an evacuee steward as liaison between the administration and the chief cooks.[730] In many respects this incident posed a repetition of events that occurred during the first weeks in Tanforan, denoting that evacuees were not willing to be contended with less autonomy than they had gained in Tanforan.

Speculations about the transfer to a Relocation Camp started the day the first evacuees entered Tanforan. In the beginning, expectations lacked factual basis and reflected the optimism or pessimism of the respective individual.[731] Ben Iijima, for example, imagined that Tule Lake resembled an idyllic pioneer camp, until he learned that the Relocation Camp was actually a desert-like place: "That kinda destroyed all my fondest dreams of going swimming and the anticipation of going to a place resembling a wooden glen."[732] As more details became known, utopian visions turned dystopian:

> We also read a letter from a resident from Poston who said that the weather (wind and dust, and heat) is just terrible. Everyone is just too tired to work, eat, or sleep; everything is dusty and hot; appetites are lost; scorpions, rattlesnakes, etc. are numerous. Then washing and other facilities are terrible. […] People faint in the mess halls, latrines, on the road, and everywhere. Many people die from the heat.[733]

By the end of August, however, evacuees had a fairly precise idea of what Relocation Camps typically looked like – that they differed from Tanforan mainly with respect to climatic conditions, which were much more extreme in Relocation Camps. While some people felt guarded optimism, they also realized that they had become attached to Tanforan. As Charles Kikuchi observed:

> People have arrived at the point where they like it here and would not mind if they stayed on indefinitely without moving on to a relocation area. Social barriers have also broken down and people are on a much more equal footing. Money and former position do not mean so much as

728 Modell (ed.): *Kikuchi Diary*, p. 218.
729 WCCA: *Bulletin No. 12,* March 15, 1943, p. 102
730 Norman R. Jackman: "Collective Protests in Relocation Centers," *The American Journal of Sociology* Vol. 63 (1957), pp. 269-271.
731 *Rumors in Tanforan*, compiled by Virginia Galhoul, JERS: 16:161-170.
732 *Diary*, Ben Iijima, June 25, 1942, JERS: 17:387.
733 *Discussions*, Doris Hayashi, p. 34, JERS: 16:260.

they did on the outside.[734]

Notwithstanding rumors that Tanforan would become a permanent camp, the wartime evacuation and incarceration of Japanese Americans moved to its second stage. On September 5, the second inspection for contraband signaled the evacuees that the move was imminent. On September 9, the exodus began as the first major group left Tanforan.[735] Yoshiko Uchida remembered:

> [Part of the camp] was fenced off to provide a place for baggage inspection before the people boarded a train that was pulled up to a siding at the edge of camp. The departure had been times for dinner hour so the departing group could slip away without creating a major commotion.[736]

However, most people rushed through supper and hurried back to the barricade to say goodbye to their friends. The head gardener of Tanforan appeared with a wheelbarrow full of flowers and gave out bouquets to anyone who could reach out a hand through the barricade. Several hundred evacuees had gathered to watch the proceedings. They were temporarily dispersed when the siren signaled the 6:30 p.m. head count, but the minute the count was over, everybody rushed back to give their friends a rousing send-off. Some of the residents climbed to the stable roofs, holding aloft huge bon voyage signs, while others waved goodbye, to make sure that the last impression of Tanforan was a fond one. Armed guards, lined up along the train and on watching from sentry towers, closely scrutinized the scene.[737]

Every time a group of evacuees left Tanforan a similar celebration was staged. Those departing were hailed and hoorayed like pioneers who embarked upon a journey to an unknown territory, although, in fact, they were prisoners shipped from one concentration camp to the next. The farewell scenes are particularly remarkable because they illustrate that in the five months of imprisonment the community had undergone a fundamental change. When the Japanese Americans were first evacuated, anxiety and angst predominated. Now, after five months of incarceration in Tanforan, the community had not only grown together, but had also grown more self-confident. Despite the shock of having lost everything, possessions and freedom, they had not lost their spirit. They had endured the first stage of mass incarceration with dignity, stoic composure, resilience and patience – in short, by sticking to same values that had sustained them all their lives. These values represented a blend of Japanese and American virtues, and they were to serve them well in the future course of their incarceration.

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734 Modell (ed.): *Kikuchi Diary*, pp. 199, 203-204, 249. See also *Diary*, Ben Iijima, August 29, 1942, JERS: 17:476-477.
735 The last group of evacuees, 355 people, left Tanforan on Wednesday, October 13. 7,673 of the 7,824 evacuees were shipped to the Topaz Relocation Camp in central Utah. See WCCA: *Bulletin No. 12,* March 15, 1943, p. 103.
736 Yoshiko Uchida: *Desert Exile. The Uprooting of a Japanese American Family*, Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1982, p. 100.
737 Okubo: *Citizen 13660*, pp. 112-116; Uchida: *Desert Exile*, pp. 100-101.

Conclusions

I still hope that yesterday becomes better.

– Charlie Brown[738]

Let us now return to the overarching question of this study: to what extent do the findings of the ethnic perspective of resistance hold true for the Tanforan Assembly Center.[739] First of all, our study concurs with the findings of post-colonial historians, insofar as it clearly showed that resistance against the keepers persisted throughout detention, thereby refuting the stereotype of the Japanese Americans as "defenseless, dependent, and abiding victims of circumstance."[740]

Furthermore, the hypothesis that resistance was "continuous and purposeful" has been confirmed as well.[741] With respect to *continuity*, the first two chapters, which placed the camp experience within the wider context of anti-Orientalism, demonstrated that resistance in Tanforan had roots reaching back to the daily struggle for survival in a racist American West. Further, I have adduced evidence for a continuum of resistance *within* Tanforan, uncovering substantial evidence proving that acts of resistance were common and interrelated. Finally, the Topaz kitchen worker strike has shown that the spirit of resistance was even carried over to the Topaz Relocation Camp. With regard to the *purposefulness* of resistance, I demonstrated – by providing a holistic view of the camp experience – that resistance represented a conscious act of asserting one's interests. Be it housing, food, sanitation, arbitrary treatment, blacklisting, incompetence of white supervisors, or limitations of the freedom of assembly – protests were always related to specific issues. For each act of resistance there was a cause. With the exception of two stone-throwing incidents there were no documented acts of arbitrary violence rooted in anger and resentment.

Having ascertained that there was a clearly discernable causation, it logically follows to ask what exactly caused resistance. The ethnic perspective holds that *culture* and *ethnicity* were the crucial factors for causing resistance; analyzing resistance in the WRA Relocation Camps, post-colonial historians have found that the main mobilizer for resistance was the WRA's attempt to suppress Japanese cultural values, which was most visible in the discrimination against the Issei. In short, the ethnic perspective demonstrated that resistance in Relocation Camps, in particular mass protests, originated primarily in the oppression of Japanese ethnic identity.[742]

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738 "Ich hoffe immer noch, daß Gestern besser wird." As quoted by Jörn Rüsen: *Kann Gestern besser werden? Essays zum Bedenken der Geschichte*, Berlin: Kadmos, 2002, p. 21.

739 As noted in my introduction, there exists a number of synonyms for the term *ethnic* perspective, most importantly *post-colonial* and *cultural* perspective. They are henceforth used interchangeably.

740 Gary Y. Okihiro: "Religion and Resistance in America's Concentration Camps," *Phylon* Vol. 45 (1984), p. 220.

741 Gary Y. Okihiro: "Japanese Resistance in America's Concentration Camps: A Re-evaluation," *Amerasia Journal* Vol. 1 (1973), p. 22.

742 Gary Y. Okihiro: "Japanese Resistance in America's Concentration Camps: A Re-evaluation," *Amerasia Journal* Vol. 1 (1973), pp. 20-34; Gary Y. Okihiro: "Religion and Resistance in America's Concentration Camps," *Phylon* Vol. 45 (1984), p. 220-233; Arthur A. Hansen, David A. Hacker: "The Manzanar Riot: An Ethnic Perspective," *Amerasia Journal* Vol. 2 (1974), pp. 112-157.

In Tanforan, by contrast, these measures were far less intrusive. This has two reasons. First, the Army considered the *maintenance* of evacuees its primary task and saw no need, given the brief duration of the Assembly Center phase, to introduce comprehensive "Americanization" programs. Regulations aiming to suppress the "Japaneseness" of inmates were merely byproducts of the WCCA's security policy, a policy that was based upon deep fears of the Japanese as inscrutable and unassimilable aliens. Second, and probably more importantly, the administration executed the WCCA's discriminatory policies only halfheartedly. For instance, the Army banned Japanese language from mass meetings, but Tanforan's administrators interpreted the rule leniently and made several exceptions. Also, English language classes and Americanization seminars existed, but so did *ikebana* and *origami* classes. Issei were barred from becoming councilmen, but they were able to elect representatives who strongly advocated their interests. (Moreover, the abolishment of self-government after only two months annulled the Nisei's privileges.) Perhaps most importantly, former Issei community leaders continued to be accepted and influential in their function as house managers who formed Tanforan's unofficial government. In sum, although the administration privileged the Nisei and sought to minimize Japanese influence, we cannot speak of a systematic suppression of Japanese traditions. This is not to say that there was no discrimination against those who expressed their affiliation to Japanese culture, but these measures were not so grave that they were perceived as a serious threat to Japanese ethnic identity.

If there was no threat to Japanese ethnicity, what was it then that caused resistance? As indicated above, evacuee resistance was mobilized by administrative incompetence and arbitrariness, by bureaucratic procedures, and by measures that cut into their already limited freedoms. In brief, resistance was directed against the arbitrariness and unreason of a bureaucratic apparatus, or rather those representatives who subordinate their better judgment to this bureaucracy. This was the overarching cause for most acts of resistance in Tanforan.

As my study has demonstrated, resistance was not simply a matter of course. The premise for resistance rooted in disobedience to irrational authority was the realization that their Caucasian keepers were not wise white men, but fallible supervisors, in some cases utterly incompetent. This realization did not yet exist at the outset of incarceration. One reason why it grew was that many inmates became aware that they were morally and intellectually superior to their keepers. Eventually the inmates became convinced that submission to impaired judgments of irrational authorities helped neither the United States nor their own situation. Related to this insight was a growing awareness that resistance and patriotism were not antagonistic. Every Nisei had learned in school that the United States was born out of an act of disobedience, in the rebellion against Great Britain. This episode was doubtlessly repeated in history and Americanization classes taught at Tanforan's makeshift schools. Moreover, the idea that patriotism and disobedience to irrational authorities were compatible, that

together they formed a cornerstone of a stable democracy, was developed and spread in the daily interaction between prisoners and keepers, and in discourses within the community. And as this insight grew, so did protests. The spiraling of protests also suggests that the poor conditions were the originating cause of the protests, which then took on a life on their own even after conditions improved.

As a final remark on causation, I should stress the humanistic dimension of resistance. Resistance against the unreason of a bureaucratic apparatus – or in Erich Fromm's words, against "irrational authority" – was not a matter of culture or ideology. Rather, as Fromm posits, it is rooted in the "humanistic conscience," which is based on "an intuitive knowledge of what is human and inhuman, what is conducive of life and what is destructive of life."[743] The increase of resistance in Tanforan, then, is a classical example for the revival of the humanistic conscience.

Having dealt with the *causes* of resistance, it follows logically to ask for its *goals* and *ends*. The primary goal was without doubt more self-determination and freedom from administrative rule. This has been convincingly attested. More pertinently, however, are the questions what were the *strategies* and *means* to achieve these ends. As with respect to Relocation Camps, post-colonial historians have demonstrated that inmates resisted by moving closer together and simultaneously revitalizing Japanese values and traditions. In other words, Japanese Americans expressed resistance by displaying group solidarity and returning to their Japanese cultural heritage. In the long run, this strategy transformed the communities profoundly, turning Relocation Camps into Japan towns whose "most salient community characteristics were group solidarity and the predominance of elements of Japanese culture."[744] In Tanforan, too, I have diagnosed an increase in group solidarity and a new community sense. However, this sense of community was not paralleled by an upsurge of the ethnic consciousness. But what, then, welded the community together, and how did Tanforan's resisters express their protest, if not through the assertion of their Japanese ethnicity?

Our synopsis of every day life in Tanforan has demonstrated that the community was welded together because the incarceration experience opened up the Issei's and Nisei's cultural horizon. In Tanforan's cramped confines the two generations discovered common ground, while simultaneously growing more tolerant of differences. In short, the community spirit arose from a greater catholicity of both pro-Japanese and pro-American inmates. The primary institution for this process of cultural harmonization was the family.[745] Through the close contact with their children, the Issei developed more sympathy for the American habits of their children while, in return, Nisei adopted some of their parents' customs. Hence, while in Relocation Camps resistance was inextricably linked to the formation of two culturally distinctive camps, in Tanforan there was no clear divide. On the level of

743 Erich Fromm: *On Disobedience and Other Essays*, New York: The Seabury Press, 1981, p. 19.
744 Hansen & Hacker: *The Manzanar Riot*, p. 142.
745 The revival of the family as the basic unit of society, as opposed to the stress of individualism in American culture, was probably the most "Japanese" feature of Tanforan.

the individual there arose a *hybrid* identity, which was reflected on the community level by a development towards a multicultural society.[746] Indeed, this development can be seen as a portent of the paradigmatic shift from the melting pot to the multicultural society.

This has deep ramifications for our notion of resistance. In Tanforan, resistance was not a question of cultural affiliation. Although in the beginning it was indeed mostly pro-Japanese Issei who protested against administrative intrusion and mismanagement, it did not take long until they were joined by a great many ardently pro-American Nisei. Evidence pertaining to Tanforan clearly suggests that resistance was carried out likewise by Japanese *and* American citizens, regardless of cultural affiliation. Both shared the goal of attaining more freedom from administrative rule. Resistance united the inmates rather than dividing them, as was eminently apparent in the movement for self-government, which resulted in the most unlikely alliance between anarchist, liberal and traditionalist forces.

Hence, our study of Tanforan partly concurs with and partly rejects the findings of post-colonial historians. What has been confirmed is that there was no *ideological* divide (i.e. between pro-democratic and pro-fascist forces) when it came to resistance. Yet our findings refute the verdict that *culture* was the touchstone for resistance. Of course there was some discrimination against the first generation in Tanforan, and sure enough, this promoted solidarity and unity among the evacuees. However, it caused no cultural realignment, no significant upsurge of Japanese ethnicity. Cultural diversity remained a salient feature of Tanforan, and the inmates developed a sense of community based on greater mutual understanding and the struggle against a common "enemy," the administration. Accordingly, resistance was neither in a "Japanese spirit" nor in an "American spirit." Resistance was carried out by those who preferred rice and those who liked potatoes, by those who believed in the bible and those who followed the teachings of Buddha, by Agnostics and Deists, by children and elderly, by mothers and fathers, by Issei, Nisei, and Sansei.

This gives rise to the question *why* Tanforan's community took this particular course of cultural convergence.[747] One reason for the flouting of the cultural boundaries was Tanforan's Kibei. Being culturally ambiguous themselves, they were important mediators between the Issei and the Nisei. They avoided taking sides and formed their own distinctive group, without alienating either of the generations. They comprised a disproportionally large part of community leaders and played a crucial role in making Tanforan's self-government as inclusive as it was, successfully balancing the interests of Issei and Nisei.

The second reason was the absence of a well-organized, orthodox JACL group. In Relocation

746 With *hybrid* identity I mean to say that the immigrant children were different from, but simular to, each culture. I mean to denote a situation of simulatneous separartion and convergence. *Hybridity* is a problematic term because it contains the notion of cross-breeding of distinct species. See Pamela Shurmer-Smith (ed.): *Doing Cultural Geography*, London: Sage Publications, 2002, p.73.

747 We must not forget that there was indeed a generational gap in pre-evacuation days, running along cultural lines, and this cultural division between the generations was carried over into Tanforan.

Camps such as Manzanar, this small but influential group was responsible for subverting an integrative community consciousness by actively collaborating with the administration against "un-American" elements. Although in Tanforan some individuals tried to do just this, they failed to occupy influential positions. Instead, liberals dominated the community leadership. The editors of the *Tanforan Totalizer,* for instance, were persistently denigrated by orthodox JACLers for being leftists, but the administration stuck to the staff around Taro Katayama, even though the *Totalizer* did not applaud WCCA policies (but it struck a distinctly accommodationist tone).[748] Likewise, Tanforan's Advisory Council was free of JACLers who sought to cut down on Japanese habits. It advocated the interests of all those who felt unjustly treated by the administration, even taking fire for those who had violated camp regulations. Hence, in addition to the Kibei, Tanforan's predominantly liberal-minded community leadership was another integrating force.

A third factor reducing cultural conflicts was the peculiar leadership style of Tanforan's keepers, which I have earlier characterized as paternalistic and mildly authoritarian. Camp director Frank Davis avoided voicing racist statements, and his demeanor evoked a mix of pity and sympathy rather than resentment. He usually gave in when the evacuees made clear that they considered a regulation unacceptable. Caucasian keepers as a whole comprised a highly diverse group. Some undoubtedly were prejudiced, but they kept their views to themselves. Those who offended the evacuees or were grossly incompetent were quickly dismissed by Davis. Most positions that required interaction with inmates were occupied by competent and tolerant civil servants from the Bay Area. Many of them knew the Japanese from pre-war days and had kept their favorable opinion despite the war hysteria.

The administration's attitude to the evacuees brings up another issue that merits re-consideration: by and large, those administrators charged with the supervision of the camp were caught between sympathy for the inmates and the requirement to impose stricter rules coming from higher up, resulting in policies that were contradictory and inconsistently imposed. The abolishment of self-government is the classic case for this phenomenon, and it shows that the administrators' attitude towards their subjects had a temporal dimension: at the outset, those who had no direct contact with Japanese Americans prior to evacuation tended to view the inmates as representatives of the "yellow peril," fearing that they would turn to mob rule as soon as left to their own devices. It is worth noting that Frank Davis and George Greene, Tanforan's camp director and his most influential divisional chief, shared this fear. Yet the longer they dealt with the inmates, the more their prejudices dissolved. It is therefore emblematic for Tanforan that self-government was abolished by order of the WCCA, and not by Davis who ultimately got along well with the evacuee council.

748 Camp newspapers run by orthodox JACLers, for example the Manzanar *Free Press*, explicitly lauded WRA policies, which alienated those with a critical stance on the evacuation.

The above reasons also explain why Tanforan remained a fairly quiet community throughout its five months of operation, and why resistance in Tanforan was distinctly peaceful. We have seen that resistance was almost exclusively expressed through individual acts of disobedience and oral protests to administrative ordinances. I have demonstrated that there was an underlying discontent, but it was not galvanized into mass protests, such as in the Manzanar uprising. In order to account for this, let us recapitulate the camp's most salient features.

First, as indicated above, Tanforan's administrators interpreted Army regulations fairly liberally and allowed a considerable degree of self-determination. A second feature explaining Tanforan's peaceful conduct was that the pre-war community patterns were carried over into the camp, unlike in some WRA camps, where the administration tried to impose an artificial hierarchy by assisting JACL functionaries in replacing the old Issei community leaders. This was attempted but did not work out in Tanforan.[749] Another reason for the absence of serious frictions between the "old" Issei leadership and aspiring Nisei was the fact that many of the community leaders were still interned in the Justice Department camps, returning only gradually to reclaim community leadership.

A fourth reason explaining the peaceful nature of resistance is the election of a broadminded Advisory Council which represented the whole gamut of evacuee interests. Fifth, whenever there was a crisis impending, the administration kept communication channels open. Hence, the evacuees had always the opportunity to negotiate their interests.[750] Sixth, there was a comparatively coherent population, predominantly urban and highly educated. This is not to say that rural dwellers were more prone to retort to violence. But there are numerous references, by administrators and inmates alike, showing that Tanforan's prisoners envisioned themselves as a model community, as the best Assembly Center, consisting of a "higher type of people."[751]

Seventh, and perhaps most importantly, the inmates were aware that their detention in Tanforan was only temporary. This point has several ramifications. Many inmates accepted Tanforan's inconveniences because they expected to find better conditions in the Relocation Camps. This also explains why the inmates accepted the abolishment of self-government without significant protests. Further, the daily contacts to visitors and the proximity to their former homes mitigated the sense of isolation and prevented the inmates from succumbing to apathy and resignation. There was the feeling of still being part of the free society. All these points distinguished Tanforan from the WRA camps;

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749 This can be directly observed at the election of the house managers. The administration appointed a Nisei foreman to select the house managers, and the Nisei promptly got his peers into these positions. Eventually, however, more and more Issei replaced these Nisei as house managers. Thus, on the grass-roots level power gravitated back to the Issei.

750 The correlation between the degree of collective protests and the utilization of communication channels is demonstrated by Norman R. Jackman: "Collective Protests in Relocation Centers," *The American Journal of Sociology* Vol. 63 (1957), pp. 264-272. Jackman argues that the development of collective protest is a function of the inability of contending parties to comprehend one another. In the absence of arbitration and negotiation, he says, groups develop divergent definitions, and conflict ensues.

751 See, for example, *Minutes of the House Managers' Meeting*, June 27, 1942, JERS: 14:502, *The First Month at Tanforan. A Preliminary Report*, Tamotsu Shibutani, Haruo Najima, Tomiko Shibutani, p. 45, JERS: 16:416.

these were barren and isolated places, and nobody knew how long they would have to stay there.

Having summarized Tanforan's most salient features, it is now time to ask which other strategies the inmates developed to cope with the psychological stress of imprisonment, for resistance was only one reaction to incarceration. Throughout my study I hinted at various strategies, which shall now be systematized and briefly outlined. Apart from resistance, it has been demonstrated that humor was an important means to deal with the humiliating experience. People learned to laugh at things that hurt them most. And those who learned to laugh were indeed the lucky ones. Further, I have demonstrated that some evacuees empathized with their custodians, thereby playing down the separation between prisoner and warden. The guards, they argued, were actually worse off than they were. Another common strategy to make their situation more bearable was to compare Tanforan to other Assembly Centers, which were generally pictured as "much worse places." Yet another pattern was to emphasize betterment while de-emphasizing inconveniences and prison-like aspects. We have seen that the inmates went as far as to refer to Tanforan as a "poor man's paradise." Indeed, "Shangri-la" seemed to be a frequent appellation in everyday discourses. Also, most evacuee records, including the *Totalizer*, compare the incarceration with the frontier experience. The "frontier interpretation" certainly made sense with respect to the physical discomforts of camp life. Moreover, that the inmates viewed their imprisonment in terms of this genuinely American rite of passage betrays their American mindset.[752] Finally, a wide-spread approach to incarceration was to consider oneself as victim of pressure groups: it was not the people at large or the government that had put them behind barbed wire, many inmates argued, but a few wicked individuals with money and influence. In this scenario the incarceration was a derailment rather than an expression of popular hostility. All these interpretations rendered captivity more bearable by blending out certain unpleasant aspects.

Most of the strategies listed above were applied by Nisei. As I have elaborated in chapter 3, the Issei were less bothered by the lawlessness of their incarceration because of their status as enemy aliens; they knew they could be legally interned and were content to stay with their families. Although some of the above-listed approaches have received only scant attention in my study, I mention them here because they add an important dimension to the explanation of how the inmates were coming to terms with their incarceration in everyday life. However, it requires a separate study to fully understand the function and significance of these *Interpretationsmuster*.

Having discussed resistance as a means of coping with captivity, we now have to embed it into the

752 See, for example, *Tanforan Totalizer*, Issue 13, August 1, 1942, p. 7, Diary, Ben Iijima, May 22, 1942, JERS: 17:361, Modell (ed.): Kikuchi Diary, pp. 60-61, 67, *First Month*, Shibutani, Najima, Shibutani, p. 47, JERS: 16:417. The inmates related to the classical interpretation by Turner. See Frederick Jackson Turner: *The Frontier in American History*, New York: Dover Publications, 1996 (orig. 1920). For a summary of more recent notions of frontier see Noreen Groover Lape: *West of Border: The Multicultural Literature of the Western American Frontiers*, Athens: Ohio University Press, 2000.

larger context of the power relations between prisoners and keepers. Our study demonstrates beyond doubt that power was not the sole privilege of the administration. Instead, both sides asserted power with varying success, depending on the specific situation. This concurs with Michael Foucault's findings that power is rather a dynamic process than a fixed property that can be conquered, owned, or defended by a person or a class. Foucault's functional analysis of power as a constantly shifting relation in which two sides actively participate by employing different techniques and strategies adequately explains the numerous inversions of power relations. This functional analysis of power does not deny that there was an imbalance in power between prisoners and keepers, but it gives a more realistic view of their dealings.

The evacuees' main strategy was to argue for their goals, appealing to the humanistic and democratic principles their captors claimed to adhere to. If that failed and the issue at stake unsettled a majority of inmates, they resorted to threats of force. As we have seen, the administration detected rebellious moods early enough – either through agents of the Internal Police or directly through complaints by evacuees – and reacted by compromising. Thus overt hostilities were averted. However, it cannot be overemphasized that the administration was constantly afraid of a revolt, and it was this invisible but ever-present fear that compelled them to give way on numerous issues. Conversely, the administrators tried to cajole the inmates into obeying orders by appealing to their patriotism and goodwill, and by promising to reward orderly conduct with more freedom. If this did not work, and if Army orders explicitly forbade the administrators to compromise, then they could always threaten to call in troops although they refrained from doing so explicitly. We must assume, however, that the mere presence of barbed wire fences, watchtowers and armed guards put the evacuees at a disadvantage against their keepers, if the worst came to the worst.

In addition to the conclusion that power rested not only with the administration another noteworthy finding has been that power was not only *oppressive*, but also *productive*.[753] As I have earlier demonstrated, repression was a prerequisite for the formation of the community identity. In a wider sense, the oppression of freedom and democracy in Tanforan incited the struggle for freedom and democracy, and ultimately strengthened the democratic conscience of the community. In other words, the violation of the basic democratic rights confirmed the inmates in their conviction that it was necessary to hold on to these principles. Hence, Tanforan stands for the dialectical relationship between external oppression and internal emancipation.

To sum up, then, this study has demonstrated that resistance was a common phenomenon of everyday life; I have accounted for causes, goals, and strategies of resistance, pointing to the importance of disobedience to irrational authority, diverging from the cultural-centric model of post-colonial

753 This, too, concurs with Foucault's findings, see Gilles Deleuze: *Foucault*, Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1992, pp. 39-45.

historians who use ethnicity to explain causes, goals and strategies of resistance. Thus I was able to explain why resistance united the inmates rather than dividing them, and to account for the process of cultural harmonization in Tanforan. I have made clear why resistance remained non-violent despite the underlying discontent and psychological stress. Finally, I have disclosed how the evacuees made sense of their captivity and showed that power operated in multidirectional ways.

The microhistorical analysis of Tanforan thus offers a picture that is too complex and dynamic to fit any theory, but it is closer to the historical experience. Despite this complexity, the history of Tanforan is still, first of all, a *grand narrative* of domination and resistance. I understand that grand narratives (sometimes meta- or master narratives), as a schema to order and explain experience, have been criticized since the rise of post-colonial studies on the allegation that the colonial other is subordinated and marginalized, and that they ignore the heterogeneity and variety of human existence. The tendency of grand narratives to distinguish between either passive victim or heroic resistor has further contributed to lack of credence in them. Yet if we abandon these value judgments and replace the fixed dichotomies with dynamic accounts of social interaction of sentient individuals, then the grand narrative appears to be a feasible frame for discussing and narrating the wartime incarceration of the Japanese Americans.

Epilogue

> *Our brief life at Tanforan is now to end; but its memories will remain with us for the rest of our lives [...]. What will these remembrances be?*
>
> – *Tanforan Totalizer*, Final Issue[754]

In history as in any narrative art, nothing is more artificial than the ending – life, after all, goes on. This is particularly true for the present work because the Assembly Center period was only the prelude to the wartime incarceration of the Japanese Americans. After five months in Tanforan, the majority of inmates was to endure three years of captivity.

Despite the shortness of the detention at Tanforan in comparison to the wartime incarceration as a whole, it has been shown to be a most revealing episode. But how did the inmates themselves assess their experiences at the eve of relocation? The final chapter concluded with the assertion that the Japanese Americans emerged invigorated from the first episode of captivity, confident of being able to deal with future challenges. Evacuee diaries mirror this spirit almost without exception. Ben Iijima's closing remark, "Utah – Yipeh!"[755] may be more exuberant than the average assessment, yet it represents the tendency. The *Totalizer's* final issue contains several opinion polls which specify what gave rise to the prevalent confidence. In these polls three aspects stand out: first, the evacuees displayed pride in their achievements; second, they stressed the advantage of gaining practical experiences; and third, they expressed satisfaction at the fact that factionalism had given way to a hitherto unknown community spirit. For instance, 18-year-old Lorraine Yamate wrote:

> [I remember most] the master file work. It was extremely interesting and a good experience in the commercial field. I have learned to work with other people closely and found that I like to do things together. I'll remember the swell music school, with its excellent staff. I also learned to knit here and I can make my own socks and even sweaters now.[756]

House manager Henry Tanaka stated:

> I'll remember best the way we were able to make friends with people we did not consider before. There used to be various cliques into which the people limited themselves. I have tried to get away from these small cliques while here and everybody seems to be doing the same thing.[757]

Another representative statement says:

> The unique experience of living in converted stalls, the sharing of community facilities and the gradual molding of the people into an institutional pattern are things to be remembered. I have been able to observe the breakdown of the former Japanese communities into a more unified whole. In this testing period, I have been able to see people either 'making' or 'breaking' to this new life.[758]

The hint at "people breaking" reminds us that not everybody emerged strengthened from the experience. It is important to recall that especially the frail and elderly inmates suffered under the

754 *Tanforan Totalizer*, Issue 19, September 12, 1942, p. 13.
755 *Diary*, Ben Iijima, September 18, 1942, JERS: 17:519.
756 *Tanforan Totalizer*, Issue 19, September 12, 1942, p. 13.
757 *Tanforan Totalizer*, Issue 19, September 12, 1942, p. 13.
758 *Tanforan Totalizer*, Issue 19, September 12, 1942, p. 13.

makeshift conditions. Even the *Totalizer* admitted, "not all was sweetness and light" (implying that for the most part it was), citing a former student:

> As for my preparation for the future […], I am starting to learn how to clean my house, iron my shirt and wash my own clothes, so that I can prepare to be a houseboy when I get out into the city […].[759]

The cynical allusion to opportunities gone by prompted the editors to reassure the reader that "attitudes like this were rare." Indeed, ironic remarks like this are the exception in evacuee records. Yet we may not forget that the *Totalizer* was strictly censored, filtering out critical opinions, and that contemporary records were shaped by the psychological need to make positive sense of this degrading episode. Hence, even though the quotes from the *Totalizer* intuit that inmates experienced the incarceration as a physical and educational experience – tough but rewarding – the dominant feeling rather was that what does not destroy you, makes you stronger.

759 *Tanforan Totalizer*, Issue 19, September 12, 1942, p. 12.

Zusammenfassung der Magisterarbeit

TANFORAN: MIKROGESCHICHTE EINES AMERIKANISCHEN "ASSEMBLY CENTERS" FÜR JAPANER UND AMERIKANER JAPANISCHER ABSTAMMUNG WÄHREND DES ZWEITEN WELTKRIEGES.

Die Grundlage für die vorliegende mikrohistorische Untersuchung des Tanforan Assembly Centers bilden Dokumente der U.S.-Armee und der Lagerverwaltung, sowie Tagebuchaufzeichnungen und Notizen der Inhaftierten, die Lagerzeitung, und schließlich die Sitzungsprotokolle der Lagerverwaltung und des Gefangenenkomitees. Die Arbeit ist in den historischen Kontext eingeordnet und erklärt sowohl die Entscheidung der summarischen Internierung als auch die Interaktion zwischen Gefangenen und Lagerverwaltung als Fortsetzung eines tief verwurzelten Anti-Orientalismus, der sich an der Westküste der USA als Reaktion auf asiatische Immigranten entwickelt hatte.

Neben der Kontextualisierung setzt die Arbeit mehrere Schwerpunkte: Ein Leitmotiv meiner Untersuchung ist der doppeldeutigen Charakter Tanforans: Einerseits war es ein Konzentrationslager, gekennzeichnet durch permanente Überwachung, tägliche Anwesenheitsappelle, primitive Lebensbedingungen, Zensur, Versammlungsverbot, willkürlich Inspektionen, kurz, Unfreiheit. Andererseits war die Lagerverwaltung bestrebt, demokratische und humanitäre Prinzipien umzusetzen, indem sie eingeschränkte Selbstbestimmung zuließ, Religionsfreiheit gewährte, und den Inhaftierten ein breites Spektrum an Beschäftigungen ermöglichte. Durch Abwägen der verschiedenen Aspekte arbeite ich den besonderen Charakter des Lagers heraus. In diesem Kontext untersuche ich außerdem wie die Gefangenen mit der als unrecht empfundenen Unfreiheit umgingen und analysiere Mechanismen wie Verdrängung, Humor, Protest sowie Sympathie mit den Wärtern.

Einen wichtiger Gesichtspunkt der Analyse ist das Widerstandsparadigma. Ich untersuche, ob und auf welche Weise die Gefangenen Widerstand leisteten. Dabei stellt sich heraus, dass Proteste weit verbreitet waren, allerdings selten offen auftraten sondern sich in alltäglichen Handlungen äußerten. Widerstand, in der Regel durch administrative Willkür provoziert, verfolgte zumeist den Zweck ein möglichst hohes Maß an Autonomie zu wahren bzw. zu erringen. In diesem Zusammenhang wird die Frage gestellt wie Macht ausgehandelt wurde, und wie Konflikte zwischen Internierten und Aufsehern ausgetragen wurden. Es zeigt sich, dass die Ausübung von Macht nicht einseitig sondern wechselseitig war. Die Analyse dieses dynamischen Prozesses offenbart Strategien und Handlungsmuster beider Seiten.

Schließlich beleuchtet die Arbeit kulturelle Konflikte der Generationen und weist nach, dass die Erfahrung der Gefangenschaft zur Toleranz hinsichtlich kultureller Unterschiede zwischen der ersten und der zweiten Generation von Immigranten beitrug.

Glossary & Abbreviations

Assembly Center – A temporary incarceration camp for Japanese Americans uprooted under Executive Order 9066. Altogether sixteen of these emergency concentration camps were set up by the WCCA to confine civilians of Japanese ancestry, pending the construction of more permanent inland Relocation Camps.

CAD – Civil Affairs Division. Created by order of the Commanding General DeWitt on March 10, 1942, it was responsible for formulating plans for the exclusion of civilians of Japanese ancestry from the West Coast (see WCCA).

CEO – Civilian Exclusion Order. One CEO was issued for each of the 108 geographical units that made up the area to be evacuated. There was one CEO per approximately 1,000 Nikkei.

CWRIC – Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians. The Commision was established by act of Congress in 1980 to review the wartime incarceration of Japanese Americans and to recommend appropriate remedies.

FRB – Federal Reserve Bank.

Issei – First generation Japanese immigrants. Born in Japan they were barred by law from gaining U.S. citizenship.

JACL – Japanese American Citizen League.

Kibei – American-born children of the Issei who were sent back to Japan for education or employment.

NSRC – National Student Relocation Council.

Nikkei – People of Japanese descent.

Nisei – Second generation Japanese Americans, born in the USA and citizens by right of birth. Nisei is used throughout this work synonymously with “American-born,” including the Sansei.

Sansei – Third generation Japanese Americans.

WCCA – Wartime Civil Control Administration. Created by order of the Commanding General DeWitt on March 11, 1942, the WCCA was the operating Agency of the CAD, responsible for setting up, equipping and running the Assembly Centers.

WDC – Western Defense Command. Comprising the eight westernmost states, it was headed since 1940 by Lieutenant General John DeWitt who at the same time commanded the Fourth Army.

WPA – Works Progress Administration. Created in 1935 by presidential order, the WPA was the largest New Deal agency. It was a “make work” program that provided jobs and income to unemployed during the Great Depression.

WRA – War Relocation Authority. Established by presidential order on March 18, 1942, this civil institution was responsible for running the ten Relocation Camps.

Tables

TABLE 1: Japanese Americans in California, 1890-1940
(Modell (ed.): *Kikuchi Diary*, p. 5; Daniels: *Concentration Camps*, p. 6.)

	Japanese in United States	Japanese in California	Percentage of U.S. Japanese in California	Total California Population	Percentage of Japanese in California Population
1890	2,039	1,147	56.3	1,200,000	0.1
1900	24,326	10,151	41.7	1,485,053	0.7
1910	72,157	41,356	57.3	2,377,549	1.7
1920	111,010	71,952	64.8	3,426,861	2.1
1930	138,834	97,456	70.2	5,677,251	1.7
1940	126,947	93,717	73.8	6,907,387	1.4

SOURCE: U.S. Bureau of the Census.

TABLE 2: Japanese Americans in the United States, 1900-1940
(Daniels: *Asian America*, p. 115.)

	Japanese in United States	Japanese (Percentage of Total)	Japanese on Pacific Coast	Japanese (Percentage of Total)	Japanese in California	Japanese (Percentage of Total)
1900	24,326	0.03	18,269	0.7	10,151	0.6
1910	72,157	0.08	57,703	1.4	41,356	1.7
1920	111,010	0.10	94,490	1.7	71,952	2.1
1930	138,834	0.11	119,892	1.5	97,456	1.7
1940	126,948	0.09	112,353	1.2	93,717	1.4

SOURCE: U.S. Bureau of Census.

TABLE 3: Japanese Americans in the United States, First and Second Generation, 1920-1940
(Daniels: *Concentration Camps*, p. 21.)

	Total	Alien	Native	Percentage of Native-Born
1920	111,010	81,383	29,672	26.7
1930	138,834	70,477	68,357	49.2
1940	126,947	47,305	79,642	62.7

SOURCE: U.S. Bureau of the Census.

TABLE 4: Japanese Americans in the WDC, by States and Military Areas, April 1940
Underlined numbers denote areas from which Japanese Americans were forced to leave. In all other areas, curfew and travel restrictions were imposed.
(U.S. Army: *Final Report*, p. 79.)

State	All Areas	Military Area 1	Military Area 2	Military Areas 3-6
Total, WDC Area	**117,364**	**107,704**	**5,281**	**4,379**
Arizona	632	362	270	–
California	93,717	89,483	4,234	–
Oregon	4,071	3,843	228	–
Washington	14,565	14,016	549	–
Idaho	1,191	–	–	1,191
Montana	508	–	–	508
Nevada	470	–	–	470
Utah	2,210	–	–	2,210

SOURCE: U.S. Bureau of the Census.

TABLE 5: U.S. Army Assembly Centers, 1942
(U.S. Army: *Final Report*, p. 184; CWRIC: *Personal Justice Denied,* p. 138.)

Assembly Center	Maximum Population	Dates Occupied	New Using Agency
Fresno, CA	5,120 (Sept. 4)	May 6 – Oct. 30	4th Air Force Technical Training Command
Marysville, CA	2,451 (June 2)	May 8 - June 29	VII Army Corps
Mayer, AZ	245 (May 25)	May 7 - June 2	Forestry Service
Merced, CA	4,508 (June 3)	May 6 - Sept. 15	4th Air Service Area Command
Pinedale, CA	4,792 (June 29)	May 7 - July 23	4th Air Force
Pomona, CA	5,434 (July 20)	May 7 - Aug. 24	Ordnance Motor Transport
Portland, OR	3,676 (June 6)	May 2 - Sept. 10	Portland Port of Embarkation
Sacramento, CA	4,739 (May 30)	May 6 - June 26	Signal Corps
Puyallup, WA	7,390 (July 25)	April 28 - Sept. 12	9th Service Command
Salinas, CA	3,586 (June 23)	April 27 - July 4	VII Army Corps
Santa Anita, CA	18,719 (Aug. 23)	March 27 - Oct. 27	Ordnance
Stockton, CA	4,271 (May 21)	May 10 - Oct. 17	4th Air Service Area Command
Tanforan, CA	**7,816 (July 25)**	**April 28 - Oct. 13**	North. California Sector, WDC
Tulare, CA	4,978 (Aug. 11)	April 20 - Sept. 4	VII Army Corps
Turlock, CA	3,661 (June 2)	April 30 - Aug. 12	9th Service Command

TABLE 6: Civilian Exclusion Orders pertaining the Tanforan Assembly Center (Major Groups)
(U.S. Army: *Final Report,* pp. 363-366.)

CEO	Posted	Counties Evacuated	Civil Control Station	Number of Evacuees Ordered to Leave
19	April 24	Contra Costa & Alameda	Berkeley	1,182
20	April 24	San Francisco	SF (Bush St)	1,892
27	April 30	Alameda	Oakland 1	832
28	April 30	Alameda	Oakland 2	662
34	May 3	Alameda	Hayward	1,211
35	May 3	San Mateo	San Mateo	891
41	May 5	San Francisco	SF (Buchanan St)	848
81	May 15	San Francisco	SF (O'Farrell St)	279
96	May 23	Santa Clara	San José	36

TABLE 7: Evacuees Entering Tanforan Assembly Center, 1942 (Major Groups)
(WCCA: *Bulletin No. 12*, March 15, 1943, p. 100.)

	April 28	April 29	April 30	May 1	May 6	May 7	May 8	May 9	May 10
Groups Entering	421	631	1,092	919	907	606	1,102	1,007	812
Total Population	421	1,052	2,144	3,063	3,969	4,575	5,677	6,684	7,496

TABLE 8: Other Reasons of Entering and Leaving
(WCCA: *Bulletin No. 12,* March 15, 1943*,* pp. 100-103.)

	Births	Deaths	Jails, INS Internment Camps	Furlough	Mixed Marriage	Other
Entering	64		49*		36	
Leaving		22	21	38		36

***** 30 from Fort Lincoln, Bismarck (North Dakota); 7 from Fort Missoula (Montana); 2 from Santa Fee (New Mexico); 1 from San Quentin Prison (California); 8 from Sharp Park (California); 1 from U.S. Marshal.

TABLE 9: Evacuee Occupational Survey
(*Diary*, Doris Hayashi, p. 229, August 9, 1942, JERS: 17:206.)

Professions Prior to Evacuation	**Percentage**
Clerical, Sales and Kindred	14.0
Domestic Workers	10.0
Housewives (part time)	9.1
Operatives	9.0

Service Workers	5.4
Farmers, Farm Laborers	5.0
Professional	4.3
Property Managers and Officials	4.2
New Workers (no Training)	4.2
Craftsmen and Foremen	3.3
Semi-Professional	2.7
Unemployables (Students under High School Age, People above 65, Disabled)	25.3
Total	96.5

TABLE 10: The Educational Program in Tanforan

40 percent of all evacuees took part in classes. 90 percent of the elementary and high school students were advanced by the schools which they attended prior to evacuation. (*Tanforan Totalizer,* Issue 19, September 12, 1942, p. 15.)

	Opening Date	Original Enrollment	Final Enrollment	Increase	Number of Teachers
First Aid	May 18	230	50	-180*	1
Art	May 25	500	636	136	15
Music	May 25	280	498	218	9
Elementary	May 25	550	658	108	26
Junior High	June 15	225	233	8	9
High school	June 15	670	680	10	18
Adult Ed.	June 18	282	558	276	14
Co-op. Ed.	July 6	10	112	102	1
Kindergarten	July 7	101	101	–	5
Flower Arrangement	July 23	80	125	45	2
Total		2,928	3,651		100

* First Aid graduated most of its students.

TABLE 11: Evacuees Leaving Tanforan, 1942 (Major Groups)

A total of 7,824 evacuees were transferred to Relocation Centers, of which 7,673 went to Topaz, Central Utah.
(WCCA: *Bulletin No. 12,* March 15, 1943, p. 102.)

	Sept. 9	Sept. 15	Sept. 16	Sept. 17	Sept. 18	Sept. 19	Sept. 20	Sept. 21	Sept. 22	Sept. 26	Sept. 27	Sept. 28	Sept. 29	Sept. 30	Oct. 1
Groups Leaving	215	502	485	514	499	509	521	500	518	526	514	516	516	532	534
Popula-tion Left	7,576	7,075	6,590	6,077	5,587	5,071	4,550	4,050	3,532	3,006	2,492	1,977	1,461	931	400

APPENDIX I

WRA Relocation Centers

Central Utah (Topaz), Utah
Abraham, Millard County; 140 miles southwest of Salt Lake City
First arrivals: 215 from Tanforan and Santa Anita Assembly Centers (CA)
Maximum population at one time: 8,130; total: 11,212
Evacuees from: California
Operation: from September 11, 1842 to October 31, 1945

Colorado River (Poston), Arizona
Colorado River Indian Reservation, Yuma County; 12 miles south of Parker
First arrivals: 250 from Mayer Assembly Center (AZ)
Maximum population at one time: 17,814; total: 19,534
Evacuees from: Assembly Centers in Salinas, Santa Anita, and Pinedale (CA); Mayer (AZ)
Operation: from May 8, 1942 to November 28, 1945

Gila River (Rivers), Arizona
Gila River Indian Reservation, Sacaton, Pinal County; 50 miles south of Phoenix
First arrivals: 520 from Turlock Assembly Center (CA)
Maximum population at one time: 13,348; total: 16,655
Evacuees from: Fresno, Santa Anita, Stockton, Tulare, and Turlock (CA)
Operation: from July 20, 1942 to November 10, 1945

Granada (Amache), Colorado
Granada, Prowers County; 140 miles east of Pueblo
First arrivals: 212 from Merced Assembly Center (CA)
Maximum population at one time: 7,318; total: 10,295
Evacuees from: Merced and Santa Anita Assembly Centers (CA)
Operation: from August 27, 1942 to October 15, 1945

Heart Mountain, Wyoming
Vocation, Park County; 13 miles northeast of Cody
First arrivals: 290 from Pomona Assembly Center (CA)
Maximum population at one time: 10,767; total: 14,062
Evacuees from: California, Oregon, and Washington
Operation: from August 12, 1942 to November 10, 1945

Jerome (Denson), Arkansas
Jerome, Chicot and Drew Counties; 30 miles southwest of Arkansas City
First arrivals: 202 from Fresno Assembly Center (CA)
Maximum population at one time: 8,497; total: 10,241
Evacuees from: California
Operation: from October 6, 1942 to June 30, 1944 (Last camp to open, first to close.)

Manzanar, California
Manzanar, Inyo County; 5 miles south of Independence
First arrivals: (as Assembly center) from Bainbridge Island (WA)
Maximum population at one time: 10,046; total: 11,062
Evacuees from: California and Washington
Operation: from March 22, 1942 (as Assembly Center) to November 21, 1945

Minidoka (Hunt), Idaho
Gooding, Jerome County; 25 miles northeast of Twin Falls
First arrivals: 210 from Puyallup Assembly Center (WA)
Maximum population at one time: 7,381; total: 10,295
Evacuees from: Oregon and Washington
Operation: from August 10, 1942 to October 28, 1945

Rohwer, Arkansas
Rohwer, Desha County; 0.5 mile north of Rohwer
First arrivals: 250 from Santa Anita and Stockton Assembly Centers (CA)
Maximum population at one time: 8,475; total: 11,928
Evacuees from: California
Operation: from September 18, 1942 to November 30, 1945

Tule Lake (Newell), California
Newell, Modoc County; 35 miles southeast of Klamath Falls, Oregon
First arrivals: 447 from Portland (OR) and Puyallup (WA) Assembly Centers
Maximum population at one time: 18,789; total: 29,490
Evacuees from: Assembly Centers in Mayer (AZ); Manzanar, Marysville, Pinedale, Pomona, Salinas and Walerga/Sacramento (CA); Portland (OR); Puyallup (WA)
Operation: from May 27, 1942 to March 20, 1946 (Last to close.)

Source: Inada: *Only What We Could Carry*, pp. 419-421.

APPENDIX II

Timetables, Tanforan Elementary School

First Grade

8:45 – Americanization

1. Pledge of Allegiance
2. Singing of America

9:00 – Arithmetic

1. Time telling
2. Simple addition
3. Simple subtraction

9:30 – Language, seatwork

10:00 – Play period

10:25 – Milk period: introducing cleanliness and etiquette

10:40 – Reading

11:10 – Creative arts, stories and music

Third Grade:

8:45 – Americanization

1. Pledge of Allegiance
2. Patriotic songs

9:00 – Drill writing (Monday and Tuesday)

– Thought problems, written problems and review on arithmetic (Wednesday - Friday)

9:30 Related reading or drill

1. Poetry appreciation
2. Composition

10:00 – Play period

10:25 – Milk period: introducing cleanliness and etiquette

10:40 – Reading

11:10 – Creative arts (Monday, Thursday, Friday)

– Stories and poems (Tuesday)

– Nature study (Wednesday)

Source: *Education Report*, Frank E. Kilpatrick (Director of Education), July 1, 1942, JERS: 14:283-284.

APPENDIX III

Agenda for the Advisory Council Meeting, July 22, 1942

Old business

1. Office supplies
2. List of administration staff and their duties
3. Important regulations to be translated into Japanese; especially bulletins 19 and 20
4. Requests of the *Totalizer* brought up before
5. Street lights [flood lights in front gates were completed by June 8, while street lights are still insufficient]
6. Meeting without administration present (time element)
7. Time keeping system of the councilmen
8. Canteen matters; articles coming in; traffic control; newspapers to be sold elsewhere
9. Contraband: Japanese printed matters; a letter was sent up but nothing was done about it

New Business

1. Clarification on workers
2. Banking problem: extend hours, charge for government check, getting another bank
3. Is the Council allowed to meet representatives from outside agencies?
4. Form of our Executive Council Bulletin – pen type?
5. Black list
6. Passes to go out of this center for certain businesses
7. Package problem
8. Second siren
9. Disinfectants and possibility of buying equipment for barbers
10. Shoe repair shop
11. Speaker's program
12. Election rally for primary election
13. Pay check adjustments
14. Sand on gravel roads
15. Visits and transfers to other assembly centers
16. If an election chairman happens to be working, can he get one day off to work on the election without having his pay deducted?
17. Meeting with different administrative heads
18. Clarification on whether the minutes can be opened to the public
19. Platforms for little children in washrooms
20. Directory of people in this center for the Council

Source: *Agenda with Mr Davis, Minutes of the Advisory Council*, July 22, 1942, JERS: 14:413.

APPENDIX IV

Administrative Messages to Tanforan Residents, September 12, 1942

TO THE RESIDENTS:

As the operations of the Tanforan Assembly Center near completion and its residents are destined for Shangri-la, let us pause in retrospect and contemplate the events and happenings since that day of April 26, 1942, when some 400 of the residents arrived as a vanguard of our Center, which was in such a short time to become home and habitation for some 7800 persons.

Time, work, patience and perseverance have transformed what was, on that eventful day, a rather gloomy, muddy, inconvenient converted racetrack into the semblance of a living community of business, social, spiritual, educational, recreational and leisure time activities.

Time has passed, as it is wont to do; the work has been provided by the willing hands of the residents, the trials and tribulations have tried the patience of all concerned and perseverance has overcome many obstacles – all of which have resulted in the Tanforan Assembly Center we view in these days of departure.

I, as the present Center Manager, express to you a sincere appreciation of your cooperation in all phases of center activity and congratulate you in your work "well done."

FRANK E. DAVIS
Center Manager

TO THE RESIDENTS:

With the closing of Tanforan Center and the moving to a relocation center near at hand, the residents can look back on a difficult job well done.

Too much credit cannot be given to the residents for their full cooperation and assistance in making the past four months at Tanforan the success we believe it to have been.

Because of the many activities of the Service Division, space will not permit, with one exception, the naming of individuals who have been of such great assistance to this division. However, I take this means to express my appreciation and thanks to each and all.

To Mrs. Mary Koba, who worked expertly with me as my secretary, I am most grateful – for long hours and volume of work, without a complaint and always a smile.

I am sure the same spirit shown in this Center by the residents will carry them through in the relocation center, and to all I wish good luck.

GEORGE A. GREENE
Supervisor, Service Division

Source: *Tanforan Totalizer*, Issue 19, September 12, 1942, p. 1.

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Note: Citations of JERS files refers to the microfilmed collection. The majority of records pertaining to Tanforan are located on reels 12-18. Each citation starts with the *type* of the source (e.g. *Diary*, or *Letter*), followed by the author. If specified in the source, page number and date are stated consecutively. "JERS" is followed by the reel number, which is separated by a colon from the slide number.

Examples:
- *Diary*, Doris Hayashi, p. 223, August 8, JERS: 17:203.
- *Information Bulletin No. 15*, June 13, 1942, JERS: 14:194.
- *Education Report*, Frank E. Kilpatrick (Director of Education), July 1, 1942, JERS: 14:283-284.

A complete set of copies of Tanforan's weekly newspaper, the *Tanforan Totalizer*, can be found in the Bancroft Library as well as in the Doe Library at the University of California, Berkeley.

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www.presidency.ucsb.edu

Acknowledgements

I wish to acknowledge specifically my gratitude to those who have contributed directly to the completion of this study.

In the first place, I wish to thank Jörg Nagler who enabled me to spend the academic year 2005/06 at the University of California, Berkeley. Without this stay this project would never have materialized. I am further indebted to Roger Daniels, who helped me without knowing me, provided me with the much-needed advice when I was searching for a specify topic. His expertise and experience in the field made him a most valuable contact. I wish to thank Natalia Bidasyuk, for her enduring encouragement, and for volunteering to read my first draft. Her deadlines have greatly helped me in the completion of this study, and so did her comments and corrections. I am indebted to Jim Mellis, whose incisive comments particularly on language and style greatly improved the study. Furthermore, my thanks are due to the "Politically Incorrect Stammtisch" from Berkeley and Oakland. Their controversial debates revealed an insight into the American perspective of many issues critical to my study. I wish to thank specifically Doug for his constructive criticism on some of my chapters, his numerous knowledgeable and penetrative suggestions. I am indebted to the *Kenshi* of the Berkeley Kendo Dojo for bringing a degree of sobriety to my writing, and for letting me partake in the experience of the multicultural United States. Finally, I benefited from the Fulbright program, not only financially, but also from their networks of scholars and alumni. Looking back I gladly realize that much of what I have written is permeated with the philosophy of this foundation.